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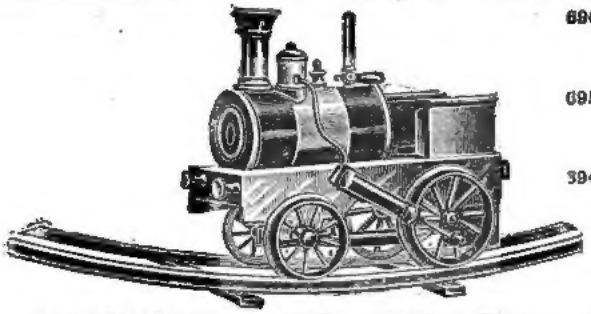

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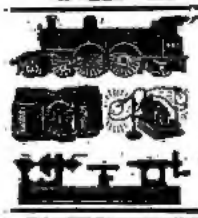

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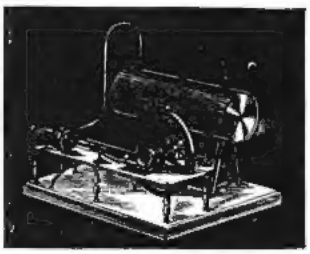

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THE CAPTAIN.

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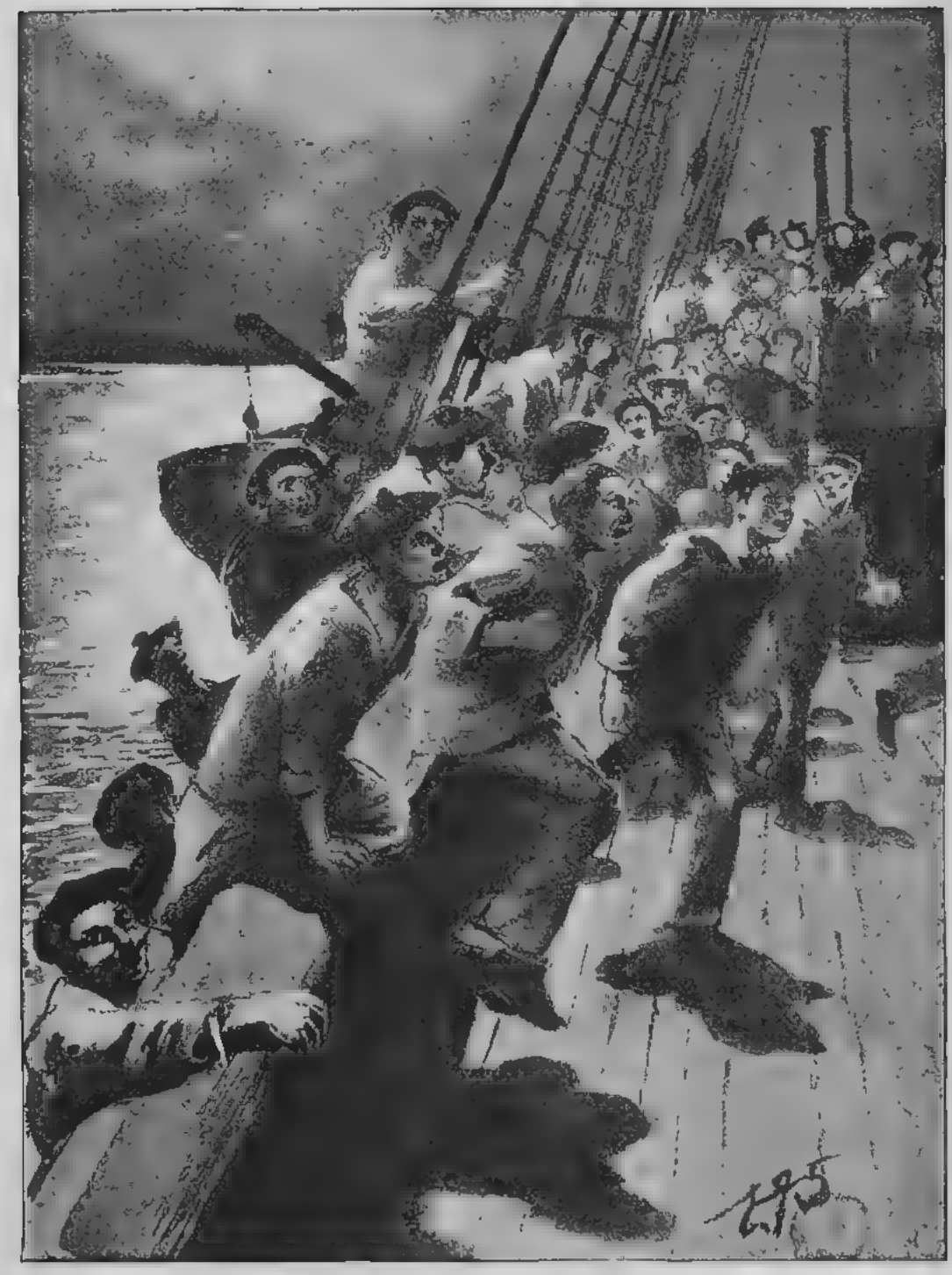
"THE CAPTAIN" CALENDAR.

FEBRUARY, 1901.

			Cycle Lamps to be Lighted.
1.	*Friday* ...	*Partridge and pheasant shooting ends* ...	5.47
2.	*Saturday* ...	*Candlemas*	5.49
3.	**Sunday** ...	*Septuagesima*	5.50
4.	*Monday* ...	*Kumasi captured*, 1874	5.52
5.	*Tuesday* ...	*Thomas Carlyle died*, 1881	5.54
6.	*Wednesday*...	*Charles Dickens born*, 1812	5.55
7.	*Thursday* ...	*Sir Henry Irving born*, 1838	5.57
8.	*Friday* ...	*Jules Verne born*, 1828	5.58
9.	*Saturday* .	*General Sir Evelyn Wood, V.C., b.* 1838 ..	6.0
10.	**Sunday** ...	*Sexagesima*	6.2
11.	*Monday* ...	*Thomas Alva Edison born*, 1847	6.4
12.	*Tuesday* ...	*Dr. Warre, Headmaster of Eton, b.* 1837 . .	6.6
13.	*Wednesday*...	*Massacre of Glencoe*, 1692	6.8
14.	*Thursday* ...	*Battle of St. Vincent*, 1797	6.10
15.	*Friday* ...	*Relief of Kimberley*, 1900	6.12
16.	*Saturday* ...	*Earl of Clarendon born*, 1608	6.13
17.	**Sunday** ...	*Quinquagesima*	6.15
18.	*Monday* ...	*Martin Luther died*, 1546	6.17
19.	*Tuesday* ...	*Shrove Tuesday*	6.19
20	*Wednesday* ..	*Ash Wednesday*	6.21
21.	*Thursday* ...	*Battle of Goojerat*, 1849	6.23
22.	**FRIDAY** .	**MARCH "CAPTAIN" PUBLISHED**	6.25
23.	*Saturday* ...	*French Revolution*, 1848	6.27
24.	**Sunday** ...	*First in Lent*	6.28
25	*Monday* . .	*Sir Christopher Wren died*, 1723 .	6.30
26.	*Tuesday* .	*Right Hon. Viscount Cromer, G.C.B., b.* 1841	6.32
27.	*Wednesday*...	*Battle of Paardeburg*, 1900	6.33
28.	*Thursday* ...	*Relief of Ladysmith*, 1900	6.35

Calendar Events for April are Invited.



A MOB OF SHOUTING, SWEARING SAILORS, CAME CROWDING UPON THE DECK.

Illustrated by
E. F. Skinner.

DOUGLAS WOOLACOT, naval cadet, was a proud and happy young man. It was the evening of the day on which the cadets of Her Majesty's ship *Britannia* had held their annual assault at arms, and Douglas Woolacot had won the Senior Boxing as well as the Bayonet *v.* Bayonet competition, a circumstance which rendered his condition of proud satisfaction an honourable and very natural one. He had upset the calculations of all those who were capable of forming opinions upon such things by easily knocking out that redoubtable boxer—last year's champion—Palairet; while his victory with the bayonet had been almost more hollow than that of the glove contest.

Besides these recent matters, Woolacot had—on the occasion of the athletic sports, last spring—won not only the mile, but also the football race. He was, moreover, a member of the cricket eleven, and of the Association football team—a list of honours and accomplishments which might surely cause the heart of any cadet to swell with pardonable pride, and, more than probably, his head also.

On this particular evening all Woolacot's friends among the cadets felt that it was a distinction to know him and to be seen talking to him. Even the naval instructor, before whom Woolacot was obliged to appear at class (with the rest, like any ordinary person) even the instructor offered a few words of congratulation at the shrine of the man of the hour, shaking him warmly by the hand when he entered the class-room—"I know what boxing is, my lad," said Mr. Instructor Parker, "and I may tell you that you gave us a treat; I've punched many a nose myself in my day."

Now, all these things—the actual success, and the insistance with which all and sundry had nursed and nurtured those feelings of satisfaction which were natural and fitting in so successful a person, had made of Douglas Woolacot a very happy and proud young officer this night. He went on winged feet. He felt benevolent. He observed a first term cadet with his jacket unbuttoned—a heinous offence, according to the etiquette of the *Britannia*—yet he passed him by unchidden; he even heard a second term cadet rattle the keys in his pocket—quite an unpardonable matter—yet he smilingly pretended that he was hard of hearing and that the sound had escaped him. With his peers, however, he was firm and dignified, and when the conversation ran, at evening, upon political matters, Woolacot laid down the law among the cadets of his term with

an air of good-natured superiority, which, under the circumstances, was accepted without question, and was, indeed, convincing. The talk was chiefly about France and the insolence of French newspapers; the possibility of war between this country and that—a contingency which Woolacot declared to be the most desirable in the world, as well as moderately probable.

"We should have them absolutely on toast!" he said. "Our fleets would be at her throat in half a dozen places at once in Europe, besides bagging Algeria and Madagascar, and Siam, and so on. We should give them beans wherever a ship showed its nose! Look at their generals—look at the Dreyfus case—well, you bet, their admirals are just as bad; you may lay heavy odds they've bought a cheap lot of guns, and of shells that won't go off; and if they do get the guns to work, the shells 'll be plugged!"

All this was self-evidently true, obvious, convincing.

"We cadets might have a look in—who knows? We'd have the old ship down to the mouth of the river and guard the approaches to Dartmouth!" continued Woolacot—"dash it! we'd anchor broadside on across the stream, and I'd like to see the confounded Frenchies try to pass us and land; of course, they'd never really get as far as the mouth of the Dart, because they'd be chawed up in the Channel first; but if they did, we'd give them something to think of before they landed here!"

"Would the old ship stand moving?" some one suggested. "Wouldn't she go to pieces if she were shifted from this anchorage?"

"She'd stand it all right!" said Woolacot; and because it *was* Woolacot that said it, and he had won the boxing and bayonets, and had done other mighty deeds besides, the statement was accepted; at any rate, no one ventured to utter a doubt in the presence of the great man.

Woolacot retired to his hammock that night on the very best possible terms with himself. He had done well. Training was over for the present, moreover, and at the canteen—after his triumphs in the fight—he had cast off the restraint of weeks and had followed the bent of his inclinations, which tended largely towards the consumption of cold sausage rolls and other delicacies of an equally deadly character. He lay in his hammock and thought.

It was not really a matter to be seriously hoped for or expected, but what a pleasant thing it would be if the French would only choose this particular night for a descent upon England, and would also select Dartmouth as the place to be attacked for the purpose of landing the troops intended for the invasion of the country.

For it so happened that the captain was absent to-night, together with several of the ship's officers. They were away at Plymouth, assisting at some considerable naval function in connection with the visit of certain officials of great importance at the Admiralty.

"Great Scott!" Douglas Woolacot reflected, "what a chance there would be for us cadets to distinguish ourselves, with, perhaps, only the officer of the watch on board!"

"Why," he added, after a pause, almost speaking aloud, "he might be killed at the first shot fired, and then"—Woolacot was thinking less of the comfort of the officer of the watch than of the glorious possibilities to be exploited in the event of the tragedy suggested by his excited cerebral condition—"and then—why, it would be a toss-up who should command—Palairet or I. The chaps would elect one of us two, and I think they'd take me."

Several loud snores from the hammocks around seemed to confirm this view of the feelings of his fellow-cadets upon the question. At this point Woolacot's thoughts began to wander into even more fantastic channels. It would be well, he reflected, to decide upon the course which he would take in the event of his election to the command of the ship. The descent of a French fleet had now, somehow, become certain. He must be prepared! First, then, mines must be laid in the river; telegrams must be sent to Plymouth to inform the captain and officers that, though matters were in safe hands—namely, in those of Naval Cadet Douglas Woolacot—it might be advisable to return at their convenience to Dartmouth, the French fleet having arrived at the mouth of the Dart.

Someone—it looked like one of the sentries from the upper deck—suddenly appeared at his hammock-side.

"Shocking thing happened on deck, sir! Lieutenant Fraser, officer of the watch, blown to pieces by a French shell while standing talking to the cook's mate, who'd just brought him a cup of coffee and a biscuit. St. Petrox Church and the old castle in flames, sir; French admiral anchored two miles out at sea, sir; cutter from the flagship now in the river, coming up fast, probably to negotiate for surrender of Dartmouth town and the ship!"

"Very well," said Woolacot. "Rouse all hands, sentry, and assemble the cadets in the gun-room. I shall proceed on deck to speak to these Frenchmen."

The sentry saluted and retired.

It seemed the most natural thing in the world to Douglas Woolacot that this important news should have been brought first to himself—it was fitting that he should be recognized as the

natural commander of the ship, failing the captain and other officers superior to the rank of cadet.

Nothing seemed to surprise him this night, however. Upon reaching the deck he found the French lieutenant already climbing on board.

"Ha, ha!" was that gentleman's greeting. "Who is ze capten here? Let him appear!"

Woolacot stepped forward, bowing politely. It struck him that he ought, by international courtesy, to reply in French, since the French officer had addressed him in English, but he had been taken somewhat unawares, and could not remember whether he ought to say "*Je*," or "*Moi*"; therefore he said neither.

"Aha!" continued the Frenchman, "then, eef you please, you will surrendaire zees taoon. We have arrived with a fleet for to take 'im."

"*Très bien, monsieur*," said Woolacot. "*Vous—vous'd better venez et prenez le, si vous pouvez!*"

"Aha! Good! Ve vill come—fear not! For the last time I ask it—vill you or not vill you surrendaire ze taoon?"

"*Certainement non, vieux coq!*" said Woolacot with unintended levity, "*pas aujourd'hui!*"

"Our fleet, she is here," said the officer, warningly.

"*Laissez qu'ils arrivent tous!*" replied Woolacot, in a gallant effort to translate as literally as possible the words of a popular patriotic ditty.

The Frenchman shrugged his shoulders; then he departed. Woolacot quickly gave orders for the weighing of the anchors.

H. M. S. *Hindostan* is, as some are aware, attached to the *Britannia* by a wooden gallery, in order that the cadets and ship's company may pass from one vessel to the other; the accommodation of the *Britannia* alone being insufficient for the large number of cadets constantly in training.

Half-a-dozen stout blue-jackets with axes soon cut the larger ship adrift, and the anchors being by this time unearthed from their graves in the river's bed, the old warship slowly floated down stream.

Meanwhile Woolacot addressed a few stirring words to the crowd of cadets assembled in the gun-room. He had taken the liberty to assume command, he said, in order that no time should be wasted. If anyone considered that he possessed a superior claim to the temporary command of this vessel, let him step forward and say so, or—if he preferred—pop on the gloves and fight a round or two while the ship floated down the river.

No one stepped forward.

"Then I suppose I may assume that you have elected me captain," said Woolacot. "Very well! God save the Queen, gentlemen! confound her enemies! Fourth term cadets, serve out arms to the juniors and help yourselves let each cadet fight with the weapon which suits him best—we shall be boarded in half an hour!"

A cadet brought Woolacot a pair of boxing gloves, a second offered a bayonet. All this was the most natural thing in the world and did not surprise him in the least. Very probably, he reflected, it would come to single encounters, man to man—he donned the gloves.

"Stand by me with the bayonet, Wilson," he said; "I shall give the French admiral choice of weapons."

Things marched very quickly from this point. Almost before each man was at his post (and certainly no time had been lost!) the *Britannia* had floated past the town, past St. Petrox and the old castle, and lay at the very mouth of the river. At this point the ship was deftly brought up by an anchor from the bows; the huge stern swung round, and a second colossal anchor flashed from its moorings and fled with a roar to its new resting place; the *Britannia* lay broadside on across the stream. England was saved!

"Let the Froggies come now," said Woolacot—"they'll not get far up this river."

"Aha! you think!" cried a voice, which he recognized as that of his visitor of a short while since; "but behold, we are here!"

It was true. With inconceivable rapidity the Frenchmen had already returned to the attack. A mob of shouting, swearing sailors came crowding upon the deck in numbers which no man could compute. Woolacot had not observed the boats creep alongside, though the moon shone brightly; neither had the look-out man nor anyone else. But that was not in the least surprising; it was the fortune of war.

Then a curious scene was enacted. Each Frenchman took upon his shoulders another Frenchman, one size smaller. Each Englishman did the same. At a given word the opposing hosts rushed at one another. Just such a scene had been enacted that very afternoon at the ship's assault-at-arms, and Woolacot was mildly impressed with the appropriateness of this particular form of battling, since his own men were well prepared and trained in it. He himself snatched up the nearest cadet. The French admiral seized a young midshipman of his own nationality, and confronted the British leader.

There was a moment of breathless suspense.

"Off!" cried the admiral.

"*Sauve qui peut!*" shouted Woolacot, to whose tongue this night French phrases, more or less appropriate to the occasion, seemed to come with marvellous readiness.

It was a battle of giants; but the result was never in doubt.

Within five minutes the invading hosts lay,

panting and defeated, upon the deck—a loud British cheer rang out.

The French admiral rose to his feet with difficulty; he approached the place where Woolacot stood, presenting his sword with inimitable grace.

"I make you my compliments, monsieur," he said; "your men have fought like the giants."

"*Oh, ne le mentiones pas*," replied Woolacot courteously. "*Vous pouvez aller maintenant à votre bateau à vapeur*," he continued, "*et faire qu'on—qu'on*—pull down *les* flags."

"Pull down ze flags? I pull them not yet!" cried the admiral. "What for I pull down ze flags? I pull down, may be, my own leetle flag; but I am only one admiral, and ve have four to every ship—see, they shoot this minute at ze taoon."

"All right; they won't hit it," said Woolacot, startled into the mother tongue; "Dartmouth is not a large town."

The admiral had spoken the truth, however.

The French fleet was already busily banging away; but—as Woolacot had defiantly foretold—the shells did not appear to hurt anyone in the town of Dartmouth, though the yelping of a dog in the distance gave some colour to a report which presently circulated, that one of these animals must have been grazed.

Woolacot now gave orders that the prisoners should be removed to the ward-room, where coffee should be served them, with sausage rolls. Upon resuming his place on the upper deck he observed that the captain and officers of the *Britannia* had arrived and were seated, smoking cigarettes and chatting, wherever each could find a perch.

Woolacot did not feel surprised, though some little feeling of resentment came over him when he reflected that he would now, probably, be superseded in the command, and this in the very moment of his triumph.

It was hard, certainly. But the conduct of the captain soon put him quite at his ease on this score. Captain Kirkpatrick handed him a sealed document.

"From the Admiralty, my lad!" he said. "They have heard of the splendid work you have done and have empowered me to hand you—this!" Woolacot hastily passed his eye over the document—it was his appointment as full captain, to date from 1875, or thereabouts.

"I am sorry, sir," said Woolacot, "to think that you should have been superseded in the command of your own vessel. This commission appears to give me seniority——"

"Oh, don't mention it!" said Captain Kirkpatrick; "as a matter of fact I have reason to know that the First Lord does not intend to deprive me of my command for any length of time. To-morrow you will be in possession of final orders for your advancement; you are to command the flagship of the Channel Squadron with the substantive rank of Rear Admiral. That is, your promotion depends upon the issue of the personal encounter of to-night, as to which there is, of course, little doubt; for the Lord High Admiral of France, commanding the *Imperieuse* yonder, has chosen *la boxe*."

"What!" interrupted Woolacot, "the boxing-gloves? Oh, jubilee!"

"You will remember, however, sir," said Captain Kirkpatrick with respect, "that the French style of boxing, which is known, I believe, as *la savate*, differs considerably from our own, in which you are so accomplished a master; the French Admiral will kick you under the chin if he can."

"I have seen him box at the Institute of Physical Recreations, in Paris," added the lieutenant. "The facility with which the admiral laid his left heel—over and over again—upon the top of his adversary's head was really remarkable, you will bear that in mind, sir, and—if I may hazard a word of advice—keep, to close quarters."

The conversation was here brought to an end by the approaching strains of the "Marseillaise," and within an inconceivably short space of time a dazzling host of bespangled French officers crowded the *Britannia's* deck. In the midst was the Lord High Admiral, wearing, as an act of special courtesy, an English uniform.

Then, in a moment, Woolacot was in the midst of the first round; there had been no preliminaries, or, if there had, they had escaped his notice.

The first round consisted mostly of sparring. Towards the end of it Woolacot was doing good work and driving his adversary steadily back, when suddenly something seemed to fall upon the top of his head from the clouds. He glanced upwards, and instantly a heavy obstacle came violently in contact with the lower portion of his chin, very nearly flooring him backwards. Then he remembered that the French admiral employed a method of boxing which differed considerably from his own, and that the officer had successfully brought off two *coups de pied*. Woolacot felt nettled.

"*Très bien, vieux coq!*" he hissed. "*Attendez un peu. Je vous montrerai quelque chose—*"

"Aha!" interrupted the Admiral. "You not like my blows of foot? That is *la savate, mon cher*. My toe, he vill in one minute box your eye!"

"*Pas si je le connais!*" exclaimed Woolacot, his blood rising at the thought of such an indignity. He rushed in, raining blow upon blow—

"*Prenez cela!*" he cried, "*et cela! je vous—je vous teacherai comment apporter votre savate ici!*"

Woolacot's French suffered in this moment of excitement, but so, also, did his opponent; for though the Admiral's feet flew hither and thither, up and down, and in all directions in search of his opponent's face and body, Woolacot was too close in, and he kicked in vain.

Then Woolacot put in a right hand hook which

WHERE HE LAY AWHILE, WEEPING SOFTLY.

sent the admiral heavily to the deck, where he lay awhile, weeping softly.

"*Si vous voudrez une lutte avec le bayonet*," suggested Woolacot kindly, "*je suis votre homme*."

This last phrase sounding somewhat peculiar in French, he added the equivalent in English: "I'm your man."

"My nose; how he bleeds!" replied the French admiral. "I fight no more!"

"Then I suppose we may conclude that the day is ours!" said Captain Kirkpatrick. "Three cheers for Admiral—— I forget your name," he added interrogatively, addressing the Frenchman.

"Pierre Victor Beaupré de la Rochefoucauld, Prévost de Montsejour——" began that officer.

But before he had quite finished the recital, a terrific explosion startled all present. A column of fire rose from sea to sky. The French admiral shrieked aloud, tearing his perfumed hair.

"My flagship — my flagship!" he cried; "He is upblown! My fool engineer, what told I him? He has used of German ammunition—and see the dolorous result! Oh, chagrin! — oh, the miserable!"

But at this critical moment a counter excitement quickly outweighed the agitation caused by the destruction of the French flagship. A bluejacket suddenly rushed upon deck, crying, "Treachery! someone has scuttled the ship!"

"Very well," said Woolacot, displaying admirable calmness; "the *Britannia* will take some sinking; there is plenty of time; let each man go to his post and stay there; let the boats be lowered one by one. Let each boat's crew take one French admiral, who will give the necessary orders for the hauling down of his respective flag."

"Aha, perfide Englishman!" said a French admiral. "We haul not down one leetle flag for ze perfide English—aha!"

"Beg pardon, sir, but what shall we do with this ere party, or any other of 'em like him, if he don't give the necessary orders?" asked a burly bo'sun, as he took his place in the cutter, with the

little refractory admiral, spluttering and protesting, under his arm.

"Wring his neck!" said Woolacot.

Then Woolacot stood and watched the whole of his crew and his prisoners leave the ship in safety. He was about to step into the last vacant place in the last boat when, with a yell of pent-up rage and defiance, a figure shot out from where it had been concealed behind the tarpaulin which had covered one of the boats, and, springing upon the young hero, bore him backwards upon the deck.

It was one of the admirals, determined to avenge his navy and his nation upon the youth who had brought disgrace and humiliation upon them!

Together they rolled and struggled; the Frenchman's sinewy hands fastened upon the throat of his victim.

"*Aha! perfide!*—I have you—how you call—on the toast!" he hissed

Woolacot struggled desperately.

"Let go—*laissez moi!*" he gasped, "or *je basherai*——"

But the Frenchman only interlaced his fingers the tighter. Woolacot made a desperate effort. Seizing the Frenchman's hands, he forced them gradually from his neck. Then, with a supreme endeavour, he rolled and twisted himself until he lay atop of his adversary, who was now at his mercy.

"Aha!" he cried, "*maintenant je basherai votre tête contre le deck!* I said I would, if you didn't let go!"

"Wake up, and don't be an ass!" said the French admiral, shaking him violently. "What the dickens are you yelling and shouting at?—you'll have the officer of the watch down in a minute!"

Woolacot looked at the French admiral—he was ridiculously like Ellis, the cadet who usually occupied the hammock next to his own.

"What's up—*de quoi s'agit il?*" he said.

"Up! Why you've been yelling fit to wake the dead; you *have* waked half the starboard watch, man—wake up! You've been dreaming."

"*Est-ce-que*," began Woolacot. "I mean, didn't—weren't—haven't we been fighting the French?"

"Only in your dreams," said Ellis.

"Jove!" said Woolacot, yawning. "I could have sworn it was a real battle!"

"Battle, bosh!—it was a nightmare!"

"And that I had had promotion."

"Rot, man! I'll tell you what you *did* have: you had too many sausage rolls."

"What! and the old *Brit.* isn't scuttled?"

"Not that I know of."

"Hang it all! It was a ripping dream," said Woolacot, wearily. "It seemed so real! Well, good-night!"

"Good-night!" said Ellis, climbing back into his hammock. "You'd better dream about something else a bit."

When Woolacot felt asleep again the French fleet had sailed.

SONG OF ROSSALL SCHOOL CORPS.

(*From the "Rossallian."*)

Look! the drummers go before, with Burton at their head;
Hark! the bugles' ringing call, the steady martial tread;
See the sappers swinging by, so brilliant in their red—
Aren't they a gallant little army?

Chorus.

Hurrah, hurrah! two hundred men and more!
Hurrah, hurrah! long live the Rossall Corps!
This shall be our chorus from the lodges to the shore,
Cheering a gallant little army!

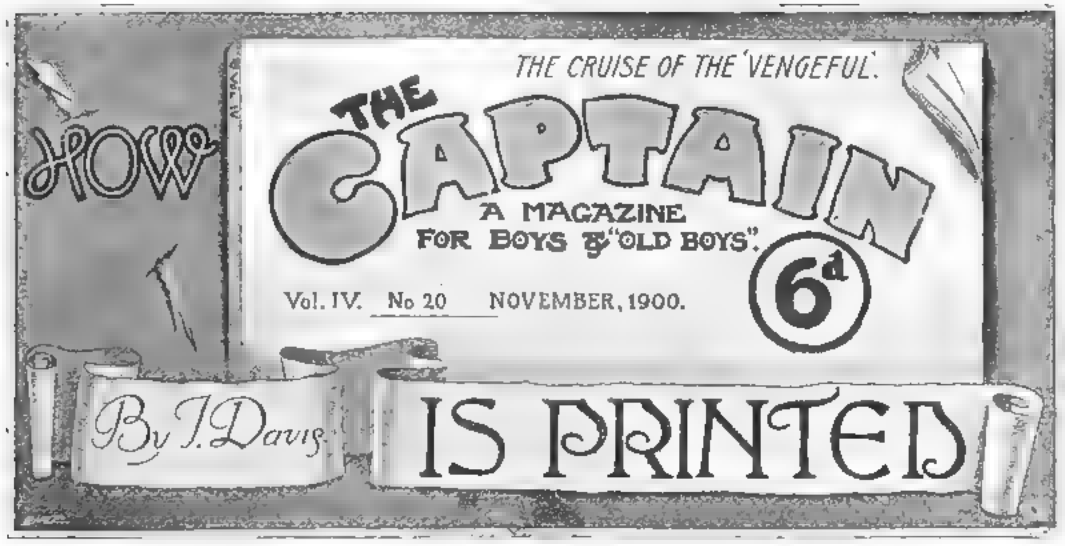
Others tell of triumphs, when examiners have reeled,
Baffled by their answers; or of glories in the field.
We remember '99, and a certain shield,
Bagged by a gallant little army!

Chorus.

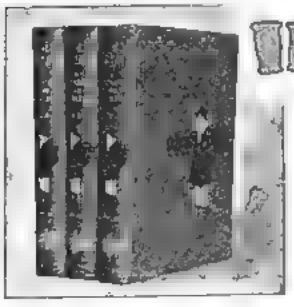
Forward, Rossall, by the right! and steady be your aim.
England shall have naught to fear while such defend her name:
Let us wish her oldest corps honour, life, and fame—
Here's to a gallant little army!

Chorus.

W. W. M



Illustrated from Photographs by J. H. Jay.



IN THE dark days of the Middle Ages the art of printing was considered so mysterious that it was treated as a species of witchcraft, and its originators were imprisoned and otherwise persecuted as beings having communion with the Evil One. Nor can one wonder at such an impression being created on the minds of our benighted forefathers, for so great is the amount of patience, skill, and labour necessary for the production of present-day printing, so far-reaching its effects, and so marvellous its results, that it really seems beyond mortal power to perform such a feat without supernatural aid.

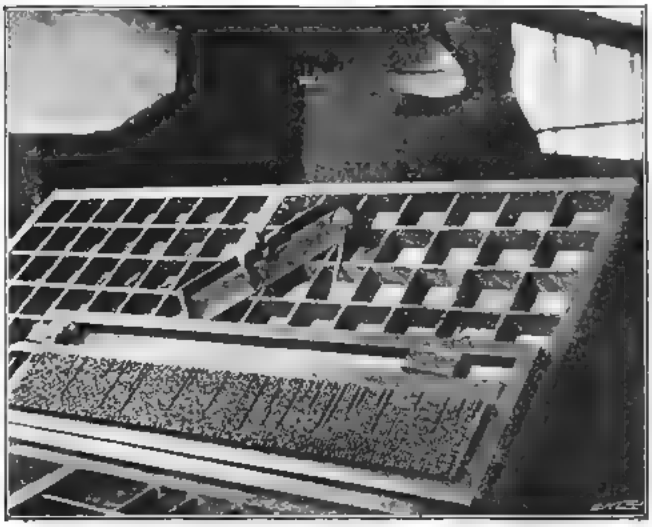
And yet, so universal has this art, and its effects, become, that nobody can be said to have completed his education unless he have obtained at least a rudimentary idea of how the various publications which meet him at every turn are produced. So firmly, indeed, is this fact impressed on our minds that in many of our larger schools it is part of the curriculum to take the pupils over a printing office, and give them some insight into the "arts and mysteries" of printing. For the benefit of those readers who have not the opportunity of a personal inspection, I will endeavour to portray the routine of a printing office, and give them a slight idea of the care and labour requisite to produce a work like THE CAPTAIN; which knowledge, I trust, will enhance its value in their eyes, and urge them to endeavour still further to increase its sphere of usefulness, and so in some degree compensate for the pains expended upon it.

"Captain—press—lg. pr."

These cabalistic signs were written—in the editorial blue pencil—on the top of the MSS. of "Tales of Greyhouse" (see p. 401), and "King Waterbottle the First" (see p. 412), and they signified that the article was intended for THE CAPTAIN, and was to be "set up" in "long primer" type.

Turning to "The Cruise of the *Vengeful*" (p. 433), and "The *Britannia's* Last Fight" (p. 487), you will find those tales are "set" in type one size smaller than long primer. This is "bourgeois" type, or, as the Editor writes on the top of MS. to be printed thus, "bgce leaded." By "leaded," is meant that between each line of type a strip of lead is inserted. If you want to see a specimen of "bourgeois" which is not leaded, glance at "An Essay on Natural History" (p. 256, No. 21).

There are also several other sizes of type used in THE CAPTAIN; for instance, "The Old Fag" Answers to Correspondents are invariably set in "brevier," and "Results of Competitions" are always in "nonpareil,"



A "GALLEY" OF TYPE, COMPOSITOR'S STICK, AND BODKIN.
Notice method of holding types in position with sidestick and quoins.

as also are "Extracts from School Magazines." The smallest type used in THE CAPTAIN is known as "pearl." (See advertisement pages, ii. and iii.) You will find that footnotes are printed in nonpareil. To each fount of "roman," or book type, there are always two sizes of capitals, the larger are technically termed "caps"; the smaller, "small caps." These two sizes are well represented in the contents —*vide* titles of subjects and authors' names. The descriptions under blocks are usually set in "nonpareil level smalls"—*i.e.*, all small caps of the size of "nonpareil."

I daresay you have now heard all you want to know about the types used, so I will go on to tell you how they are "put together." On receiving the copy, and instructions as to the type in which to "set" it, from the editor, the printer divides it into portions (technically called "takes"), according to the length of the article and time allowed to set it. The compositor having "lifted" copy, holds his "stick" in his left hand, and with his right puts the types, one at a time, into it. Between each word he puts a small piece of metal (not so high as the type, so that it will not show when printed) called a "space," and when he has set up as many words as the line will hold, he takes out these pieces and puts in either larger or smaller ones, so as to make all the lines of uniform length. This is called "setting up the copy."

A compositor's "stick" is a piece of metal (generally steel, sometimes brass or nickel) about 6ins. to 12ins. long, 2ins. broad, and 1-32in. thick. The back of this is turned up to form a rim about ⅛in. high, and at the farther end from his hand there is a piece of metal of corresponding height. At the nearer end to the compositor is an adjustable slide, held by a screw, which can be moved nearer or farther from the outer end, according to the width required for the column.

Having filled his stick, the compositor lifts the matter out and deposits it on a "galley." This is a piece of zinc about 6ins. wide, 24ins. long, with ridges of brass ⅛in. high at one end, and on either side. When the galley is full, a stick of wood (technically termed a "sidestick") the

The Siege of Ladysmith vividly recalls
This Type is Nonpareil.

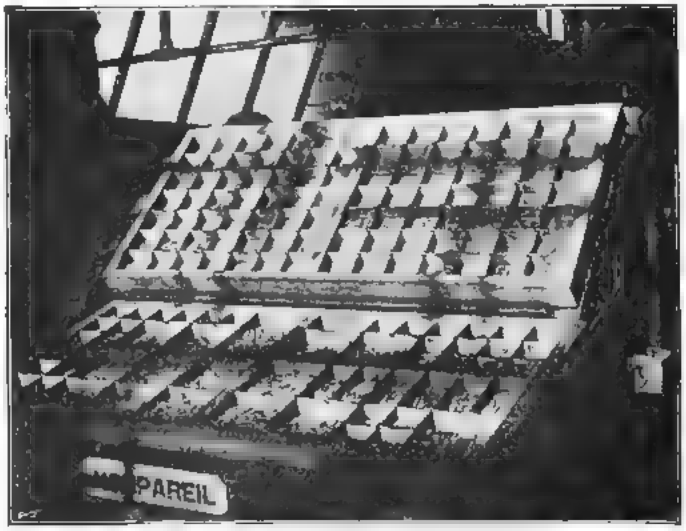
The Siege of Ladysmith vividly
This Type is Minion.

The Siege of Ladysmith vividly
This Type is Brevier.

The Siege of Ladysmith vividly
This Type is Bourgeois.

The Siege of Ladysmith vivid
This Type is Long Primer.

SPECIMENS OF TYPE USED IN "THE CAPTAIN."



A PAIR OF CASES, SHOWING DIVISIONS FOR TYPE.

length of the galley, and thicker one end than the other, is put against the type, and smaller pieces (called "quoins") are put between this and the side of the galley. By pushing these quoins to the top and thicker end, the types are wedged firmly to the side of the galley, to prevent their falling down when proofs of it are taken. Our first illustration shows composing stick and galley of type, with sidestick and quoins complete. The little tool by the side of the composing stick, and which somewhat resembles a bootmaker's awl, is called a "bodkin," and is used by the "comp." (our abbreviation of compositor) to lift up lines when correcting.

Proofs of these "slips" are then despatched to the editor, for his perusal and approval—or otherwise.

Specimen portion of such a slip:—

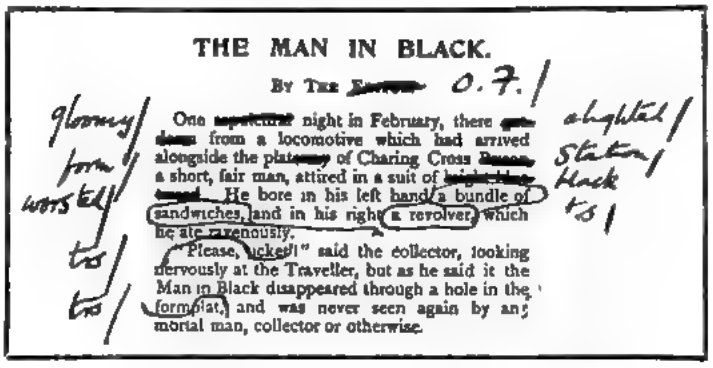
THE MAN IN BLACK.

By The Editor.

One sepulchral night in February, there got down from a locomotive which had arrived alongside the plateway of Charing Cross Prison a short, fair man, attired in a suit of bright blue tweed. He bore in his left hand a bundle of sandwiches, and in his right a revolver, which he ate ravenously.

"Please, ticket!" said the collector, looking nervously at the Traveller, but as he said it the Man in Black disappeared through a hole in the formplat, and was never seen again by any mortal man, collector or otherwise.

Now, the common or garden editor, on receiving proofs of such a medley as this, would simply throw it into the W. P. B. (if he gave it to the office dog, 'twould choke him), and re-write the copy as he had originally intended. Not so our chief. He never countermands an order; but if he finds he has steered out of the right course, he circumnavigates as it were, and, consequently, after forwarding the above pulls, the printer received by return of post, what he at first mistook for a despatch from the Chinese Government, ratifying the annexation of the Celestial Empire by the Russians. On closer inspection he found, however, it was only the proof returned, slightly altered.



THE MAN IN BLACK.

By The [illegible] O.F.

One [illegible] night in February, there [illegible] from a locomotive which had arrived alongside the plateway of Charing Cross [illegible], a short, fair man, attired in a suit of [illegible] worsted. He bore in his left hand a bundle of sandwiches, and in his right a revolver, which he ate ravenously.

"Please, ticket!" said the collector, looking nervously at the Traveller, but as he said it the Man in Black disappeared through a hole in the formplat, and was never seen again by any mortal man, collector or otherwise.

PROOF SHOWING EDITOR'S ALTERATIONS.

THE MAN IN BLACK.

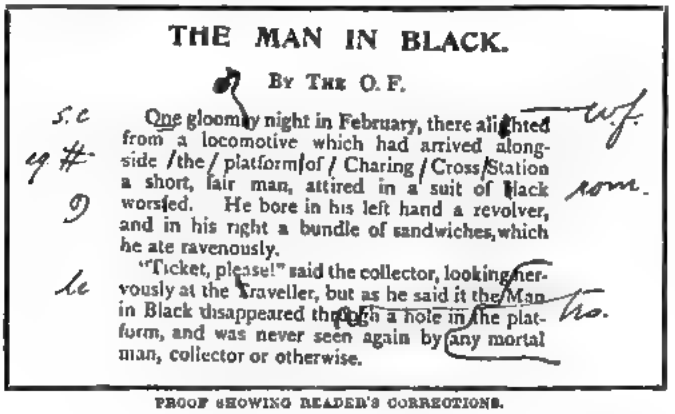
By The O. F.

One gloomy night in February, there alighted from a locomotive which had arrived alongside the platform of Charing Cross Station a short, fair man, attired in a suit of black worsted. He bore in his left hand a revolver, and in his right a bundle of sandwiches, which he ate ravenously.

"Ticket, please!" said the collector, looking nervously at the traveller, but as he said it the Man in Black disappeared through a hole in the platform, and was never seen again by any mortal man, collector or otherwise.

"THE MAN IN BLACK" AS FINALLY CORRECTED.

Compare this with the Editor's and Reader's proofs and the meanings of the marks will be apparent.



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PROOF SHOWING READER'S CORRECTIONS.

ONE OF THE COMPOSING ROOMS.
Note the "comp" locking up forme, on the loft, and pressman pulling proofs, on the right.

The compositor whose task it was to correct these proofs worked with characteristic patience on them for two days, and then was promptly carried to the asylum at Hanwell, where he now spends his time setting imaginary sticks of CAPTAIN, the while he hums :—

> I corrected those proofs so carefullee
> That now I am the ruler of the Queen's Navee.

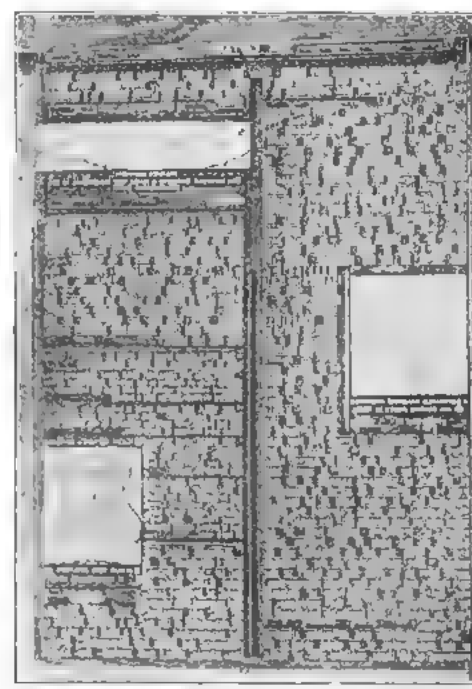
While he was being conducted off the premises, the galleys he had corrected were again pulled and given to the reader, together with the editor's returned proofs, for him to revise.

After the tales, articles, poems, and "fill-ups" (the short articles, making half pages or less, put at end of long articles to fill up pages) have been sent to the printer, returned to the editor in proof slips, corrected by the authors, "cut-down" by the editor, "pasted up" by the art editor—that is to say, proof slips are cut up and pasted round the pictures to show where the latter should fall—and returned to the printer, he runs the type round the blocks and sends what are called "pages" to the editor.

The blocks are first sent into the foundry to be "mounted" on metal to make them type high; for, as all type is a uniform height of 11-12in. (a shilling standing edgewise is type high), all blocks to work therewith must also be that height. These blocks being returned to the printer, he then makes up the pages of type to correspond as nearly as possible with the paste-up which he has received.

Our fourth photograph shows how the pages are made up. All blocks, etc., must be "justified" to a hair, or else the lines would not be straight. If you look closely at this photograph you will see the little pieces of lead, wood, card—aye, and in some instances, paper—that have to be used to make the blocks the same depth as the lines of type beside them.

The editor having read proofs of these pages and passed them for press, they are next "imposed for foundry." That is, they are put into frames of iron about 1in. broad, as deep as the type is high (11-12in.), and large enough to take four pages each—these frames are technically termed "chases." After being carefully looked over (to see that all is straight) and "locked up"—the type is held together and prevented from falling out of the chase by pressure (there being no bottom to the



A PAGE OF TYPE WITH BLOCKS, SHOWING JUSTIFICATIONS.
See THE CAPTAIN, Vol. IV., October, page 72.

chases) in the same way as on the galley; *i.e.*, by means of sidesticks and quoins—the "forme" is then sent to the electrotyping department. The photograph at top of this page, showing "comp" correcting forme, gives a very good idea of a forme of type and method of quoining up same. By the side of the forme is the mallet and "shooting stick," with which the comp drives the quoins up to the thicker edge of the sidestick. The piece of wood upon the mallet is called a "planer," and, by laying its smooth surface on the type, and knocking the top gently with the mallet, any types that may be standing up are brought down to a level with the others, else, instead of printing, they would make holes in the paper.

On reaching the electro department (or

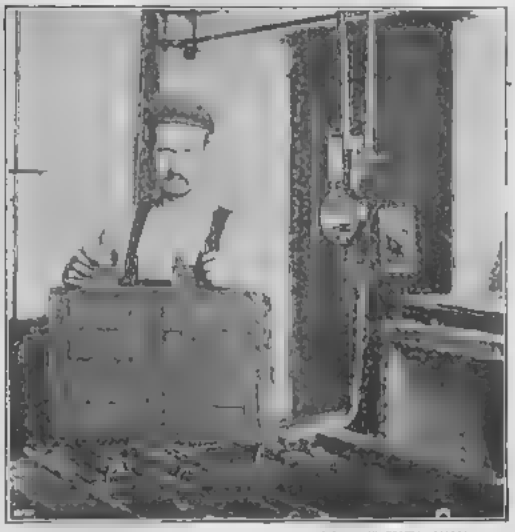
CORRECTING FORME.

Note mallet and planer at comp's right hand and method of fixing quoins round chase.

REMOVING THE WAX IMPRESSION FROM FORME ON HYDRAULIC PRESS.

foundry) it is thoroughly cleaned and every particle of ink or dirt of any kind carefully removed from the surface. Then a metal tray of wax, which has been well covered with black lead or graphite, is put over it—the black-leaded surface of the wax next the face of the type. The whole is then put under an hydraulic press, and a "mould" or "impression" of the forme is taken in the wax.

Our next illustration shows forme on hydraulic press, and electrotyper in the act of removing the mould from its surface. This mould is placed in a bath containing copper solution (see photograph), and an electric current causes particles of copper to adhere to the black lead on the mould. These particles cover the whole surface until a film of copper of even thickness is formed about as stout as a piece of paper. The mould is then taken out of the bath, and the "copper shell" removed from the wax. The shell is then "tinned" at the back, the edges are trimmed down to it is the correct size to fit the cylinder of the machine, and it is



THE SAME WAX IMPRESSION BEING PUT INTO THE DEPOSITING TANK

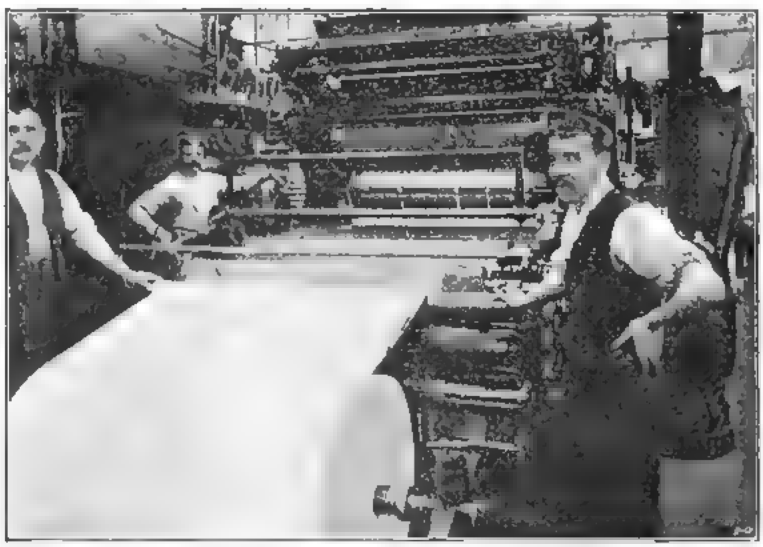
FINISHING PLATE.
The finisher is chipping off the surplus metal (blacks) before sending plate to machine.

put into the "casting box" to be "backed up"—that is to say, it is placed (face downwards) between two cylindrical pieces of iron about ½in. apart, and molten metal is poured on it. This metal fills up every indentation, giving a smooth, even surface at the back—and then you have a semi-circular electro plate about ¼in. thick, with edges ready bevelled to fit into grooves on the machine cyclinders.

The weight of the molten metal causes those parts of the page which should appear white on the paper to bulge out, so that they are as high as the type, and if not carefully cleared away they would print also, and give the page a very dirty appearance. These parts have, therefore, to be routed out by machinery, or, in the case of very small spaces, chipped out by hand, before being sent to machine, as shown in illustration above.

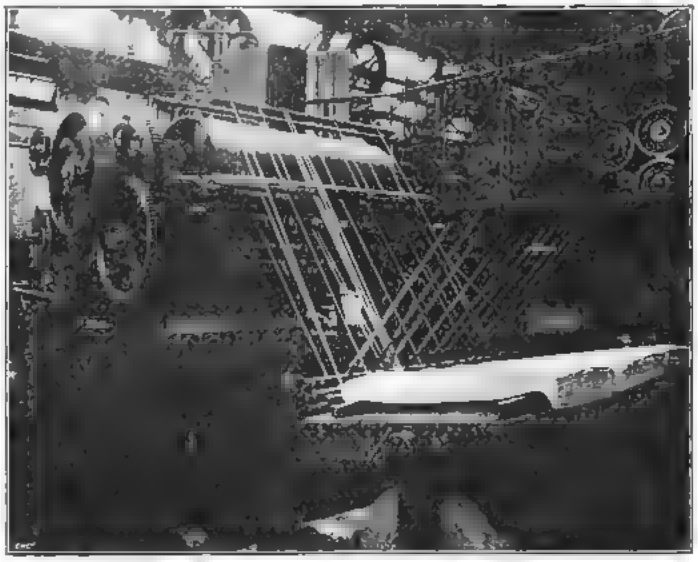
The plates are then fastened on to the machine cylinders by fixing the bevelled edges into grooves, and a few rollers and enough ink are put on to give a rough impression of the pages on the cylinder. Before the blocks are made up into pages, four pulls of each are given to the machine minder, from which he cuts his "overlays." The first of these he keeps intact; from the second he cuts away all those parts which appear white on the picture, and then pastes it over the first, so that each line and feature fits to a hair; from the third he cuts away all the white and lightest shades, and then pastes that over the second; and from the fourth he cuts away all but the black parts of the illustration and pastes these over the third, taking great care that they fit exactly. Having carefully prepared his "overlay" he pastes it on the cylinder immediately over the rough impression taken from the plates, with the result that the different shades get a proportionately heavier or lighter impression, and the lights and shades of the picture are thereby greatly accentuated. Were it not for this the many beautiful illustrations which now appear as life-like portraits would be little better than indecipherable blots.

Another impression is then taken of the pages, this time on paper, and as it is impossible to get the plates so exactly level that the same amount of impression is given to each part of the plate surface, those pages, or parts of pages, which appear too light have pieces of paper pasted on them, and those that appear too heavy are cut out. This sheet is then



REEL OF PAPER ENTERING MACHINE.

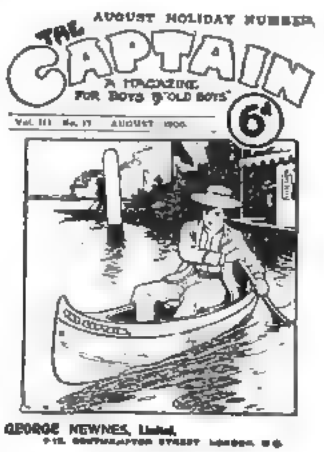
pasted in its turn under the blanket, great care being exercised that every portion falls duly over its counterpart. This process is continued until satisfactory, and is technically known as "making ready." Yet another pull is taken off, which is given to the press reader, who carefully looks over it to see that no words or letters have been chipped off in clearing the plates, etc., and when any discrepancies he may mark have been attended to, a pull is given to the machine overseer to see that the cuts are properly brought out, and that the general appearance is as it should be; and then we are ready to start.



THE OTHER END OF MACHINE, SHOWING PRINTED SHEETS.

At either end of the machine there is a large reel of paper—one carrying about two miles of white CAPTAIN paper, and the other bearing the set-off paper—a harder and stouter paper that runs through with the white and prevents the ink on the printed side from coming into contact with the cylinders above, in which case these cylinders would become so covered in ink as to spoil all that passed between them. As the copies are thrown off, the "machine minder" periodically extracts a sheet from the bulk and carefully scrutinizes it to see that all is working clean. He must also keep a wary eye on his machine, for it is as delicate as a clock, and should even the smallest cog go awry, incalculable damage would be wrought if it were not immediately stopped. For that purpose, a man is always ready with his hand on the "striker" (a lever which slips the band connected with the shafting off the driving wheel), ready to strike it at a moment's notice. His position is well defined on the left of the photograph showing reel of paper entering machine.

Red forme.



Blue forme.

PHOTOGRAPH OF THE COVER, SHOWING THE COLOUR FORMES.

Truly has it been said that the printing machine is the most wonderful of all inventions. The feats of the ancient gods pale before the accomplishments of this twentieth century giant, which in a few minutes can change miles of paper into thousands of willing elves anxious to traverse the globe and spread instruction and amusement wherever they go.

The cover is printed on a "flat" machine. That is to say, the plates, instead of being semi-circular are cast flat, mounted on wood, and rest on a flat surface instead of on cylinders Each colour is a separate forme and requires a separate working. Special machines have to be used for this process, in which the vibration is reduced to a minimum, as the colours have to fit to such a nicety that the slightest shifting of the paper during

the process of printing would spoil the whole appearance. The illustration on preceding page is of the two plates (the red and blue) used for the cover of issue, dated August, 1900.

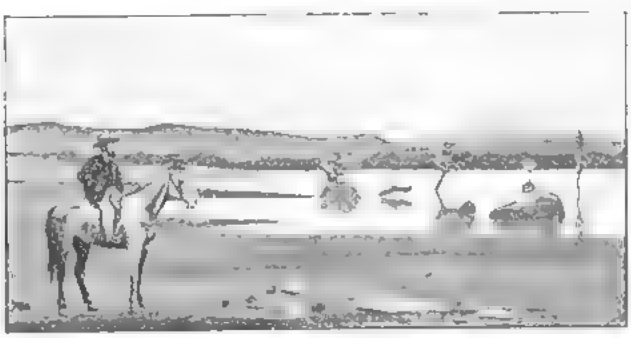
If you look at the bottom of page 385 of the current issue you will see, in very small type, in the left-hand corner the words "Vol. iv.—41," and eight pages further on "Vol. iv.—42," and on page 401 "Vol. iv.—43," and so on at every eight pages. These "signatures" are put on the first page of each section for the convenience of the folder, who is thereby saved the trouble of looking all over the sheet for the outside page. They are also of great assistance to the binder, who, when collating the several portions, knows that, so long as he keeps these parts in their numerical order, the pages will be in their right places when the book is bound.

When all the parts are in their proper order, making a complete book minus the cover, they are pressed together by machinery, and wire stitches are then put through to hold them securely. The cover is now glued on, the edges are trimmed, and the little volume is fully equipped for its mission of instruction and delight for young and old.

AN AUSTRALIAN MIRAGE.

About two years ago I spent a holiday in a little town away in the "back blocks" of New South Wales. Goodooga (which is about 600 miles from Sydney) was a very small place, containing about 270 persons, and surrounded on all sides, within a radius of twenty miles, by large sheep and cattle stations.

About a week after my arrival there I was one day out riding with a friend, and, while crossing a long plain, saw a most peculiar and pretty sight.



AN AUSTRALIAN MIRAGE.
Drawn in Australia by Walker Hodgson.

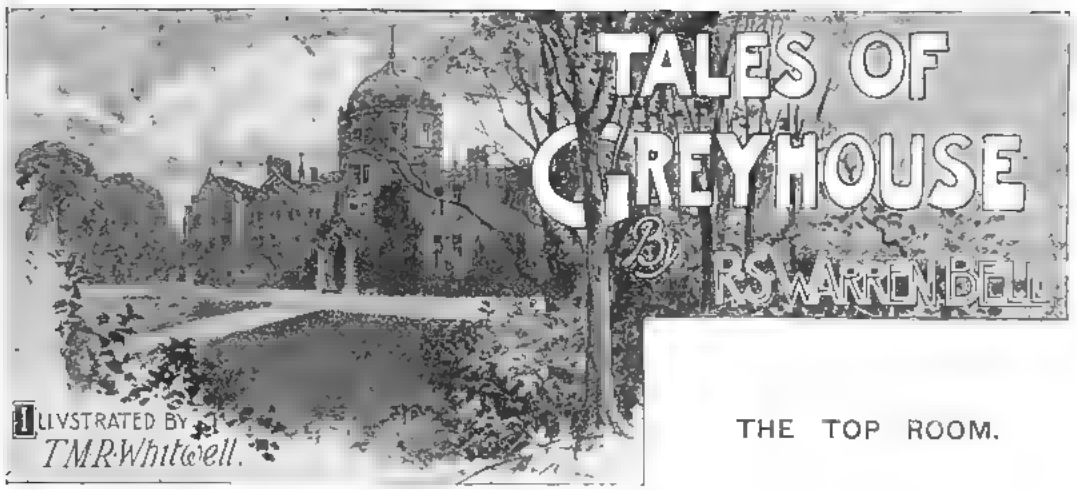
About a mile before us was what appeared to be a moderately large fresh-water lake, extending for quite a mile across the plain. To me, a thorough "new chum," it was a magnificent sight. It was a very hot day (about 150 degs. F. in the sun), and, from where we were, the "water" sparkled brilliantly. As we approached closer I was even more surprised than before, for we could actually see the reflection of the tall myalls and gidyea in the supposed water. I reined in my horse, and for a long time paused to admire this pretty view. I cannot explain the cause of the reflection of the trees—indeed, I doubt if many could; but, as long as we stood in that position it was there with surprising plainness. By way of an experiment, I asked my friend to ride on and call out to me when it began to disappear. After walking for, perhaps, 30yds., he called back:—

"It is beginning to draw away from me." Another 30yds., and he roared out: "I can only see a little blue haze now." And yet, the whole of the time he was riding on, it was as plain and distinct *to me* as before.

Then I cantered up to join him, and slowly it receded from view. Presently I was standing over the very spot where we had first seen it; but, although I examined the ground closely, it resembled that around it in every detail.

By the time we had crossed the long plain it was again in view, and now I saw a prettier sight than before. To the right and left of us, away in the distance (probably five or six miles), there stretched across the plain what appeared to be a long chain of miniature lakes; each being joined to the other by a very narrow neck of land. At such a distance the view one had was almost enchanting, and the "water" of the lakes appeared as blue as the ocean. About 3.30 in the afternoon we returned; but there was not a single trace of what we had witnessed a few hours before; and although in my six months' holiday I saw it many times, it was never once after noon.

E. George Boreham.



THE TOP ROOM.

QUITE a number of years ago, before Greyhouse was anything like as big as it is now, a big fellow named Parsons told a little fellow named Moody to run "down town" (as going into the village was termed) and buy him a sixpenny packet of cigarettes at Mother Cadby's. At that time Mother Cadby's was "in bounds" to all chaps who were allowed "leave west," *i.e.*, in the village. Only the Upper and Lower Sixth and the Upper Fifth enjoyed perpetual "leave west"—the remainder had to keep "east" of the school when they took walks abroad if they didn't want to be reported and whacked. If one desired to go "west" it was necessary to obtain a "pass" from one's form-master, who would not grant one a pass more than three times in a term, and then only if one's conduct and work had been satisfactory—which, as often as not, it *hadn't* been!

The time came (as I think I have told you in these "Tales") when Mother Cadby was excommunicated by the school authorities for giving "tick," lending money, and so forth. But at the period I am speaking of, she was allowed to trade with the boys, although the Head, as he walked down the village, often glanced at Mother Cadby's shop with suspicion. He didn't trust the old woman; he suspected her—and rightly. In spite of the fact that she hadn't a shadow of a license, Mother Cadby used to purvey dry packet tobacco, infamous cigars, cheap cigarettes, and *clay pipes!* Yes, many a lordly senior have I seen wobbling up to the school with a face as white as a sheet—*he had been smoking in Mother's back garden!* In this back garden was a little arbour, and here, it was whispered, Mother Cadby would serve *bottled beer* to certain favoured customers. She was as wily an old caution, was Mother Cadby, as any I ever did meet. Her greedy little eyes twinkled under bushy brows, her nose dipped in like a hawk's beak, her chin seemed to be gradually approaching her nose, she had only got about two teeth, and her shrivelled skin hung in loops and layers from her face-bones. Of course, she couldn't help being ugly and ancient, but she could help being wicked.

Before "school shops" were instituted there were thousands of Mother Cadbys in the land; they robbed the schoolboy much as Marryat's bumboat women used to prey on the simple sailor-man. Nowadays the "shop," a beautifully neat, well-managed, well-paying concern, absorbs the public schoolboy's shillings and pence, and some school institution thrives on the large profits which most school shops yield. Of course, this is as it should be, but it is a prosaic way of buying tuck. A successful deal with Mother Cadby, when she was "out of bounds," gave one the same sort of thrill that the old-time smuggler must have enjoyed when he managed to dodge the coast-guard!

"But I haven't got leave west, Parsons," said Moody.

"Go and get it, then," roughly retorted Parsons.

"Kitt's out—I saw him go on his tricycle," explained Moody.

Mr. Kitt was form-master to the First.

"Then do without leave," said Parsons, "and if you're caught I'll lick you. Get along now, and look sharp."

And with this threat Parsons limped away to

his class-room—a severe hack at football having incapacitated him from playing, consequently leaving him a large amount of idle time to get through.

Young Moody pulled his cap over his eyes, stole round the chapel, climbed over the red iron railings, and scanned the road leading down to the village. He could see neither master nor monitor. At the present time there are twenty masters at Greyhouse, but then there were but twelve. This being a "half"—it was on a Wednesday—the masters not playing "footer" would be all out golfing or cycling. As for the monitors—well, Parsons was in the fifteen, and it was not likely that a monitor would go out of his way to turn back a fellow who was "fagging for Parsons"—that prime favourite with the crowd on the touch-line.

So Moody—not at all liking the job, but knowing that he must go through with it—trotted stealthily down the road, keeping a very sharp eye open as he sped on his way.

He reached the shop in safety—not a soul connected with Greyhouse did he even catch a glimpse of. Mother Cadby was standing at her door.

"Well, what is it?" she asked sourly.

"Packet of cigarettes, please, Mrs. Cadby."

"*Cigarettes!* What does a baby like you want with cigarettes? Besides, I only sell sweets and cakes," she added in a tone of great innocence; "I'm not a tobacconist."

"Oh, come!" retorted Moody, gathering confidence, "that won't wash, you know, mother. Every chap says you do. I say, hurry up! I haven't got leave!"

"I'll trouble you to be more respectful," retorted Mrs. Cadby. "*Mother*, indeed! Little boys should learn better manners."

"Oh, I say—stop this jawing! Look here, they're for Parsons—not for myself."

"Oh, Mr. Parsons!" returned "Mother," in a more respectful tone. "Yes, I know Mr. Parsons. Well, how many?"

"A sixpenny packet."

"All right," she grumbled, as she turned into the shop. "Come in, and I'll see if there's any left."

There was a quick step on the path. Moody turned his head. By Jove—*Phillips!*

Phillips was Captain of Greyhouse. He had been "up" for a scholarship at Cambridge, and was now returning from the station, Gladstone bag in hand.

"Hi, Moody!" he called. "Here, I want you." Moody went obediently, for he happened to be Phillips' fag.

"Yes, Phillips?"

"Just cart this bag up to my study, and then get tea. The Head said he wanted to see me directly I got back, so I'll take a short cut through the garden."

Phillips looked very bright. He had done excellent papers—he wanted to show the Head his questions—and had every reason to believe that he had won the scholarship.

As Moody took over the bag Mother Cadby waddled to the door with: "Here's the cigarettes. Tell Mr. Parsons it's the only sort I have left."

Phillips glanced inquiringly at his fag.

"Did Parsons send you to buy those cigarettes?" he demanded, sternly.

There was nothing for it but to admit it, and Moody did so, though with evident reluctance.

"Have you got 'leave west'?"

"No, Phillips."

"That makes it worse—well, take my bag. If Parsons sees you, tell him you're fagging for me. Never mind the cigarettes."

Moody slunk off with the bag, and Phillips strode into the shop, Mother Cadby retiring before him.

"Now, Mrs. Cadby, just listen to me. I don't want to do you any harm, but if I hear of your selling tobacco of any kind to any of the fellows, I'll report the matter to the Head."

And with this one sharp sentence he turned on his heel and left her. Mother Cadby sank into a chair, trembling. She knew who Phillips was, although he never entered her shop, and she stood in great awe of him. She knew that he would keep his word, too.

Twenty minutes later Phillips walked into the Upper Fifth class-room, and shut the door behind him.

"Parsons, I understand you sent Moody down town to buy cigarettes, and without even a pass?"

"Well, what if I did?"

"Only this. That I've told Mother Cadby I'll report her to the Head if she sells any more tobacco to any Greyhouse fellow. In addition, I told Moody not to bother about your cigarettes."

"Well, that was pretty good cheek of you, I must say," retorted Parsons, "and bad for the kid, because I shall have to thrash him now."

"If," said Phillips, coming up to where Parsons was sprawling, "you thrash Moody, I will thrash you."

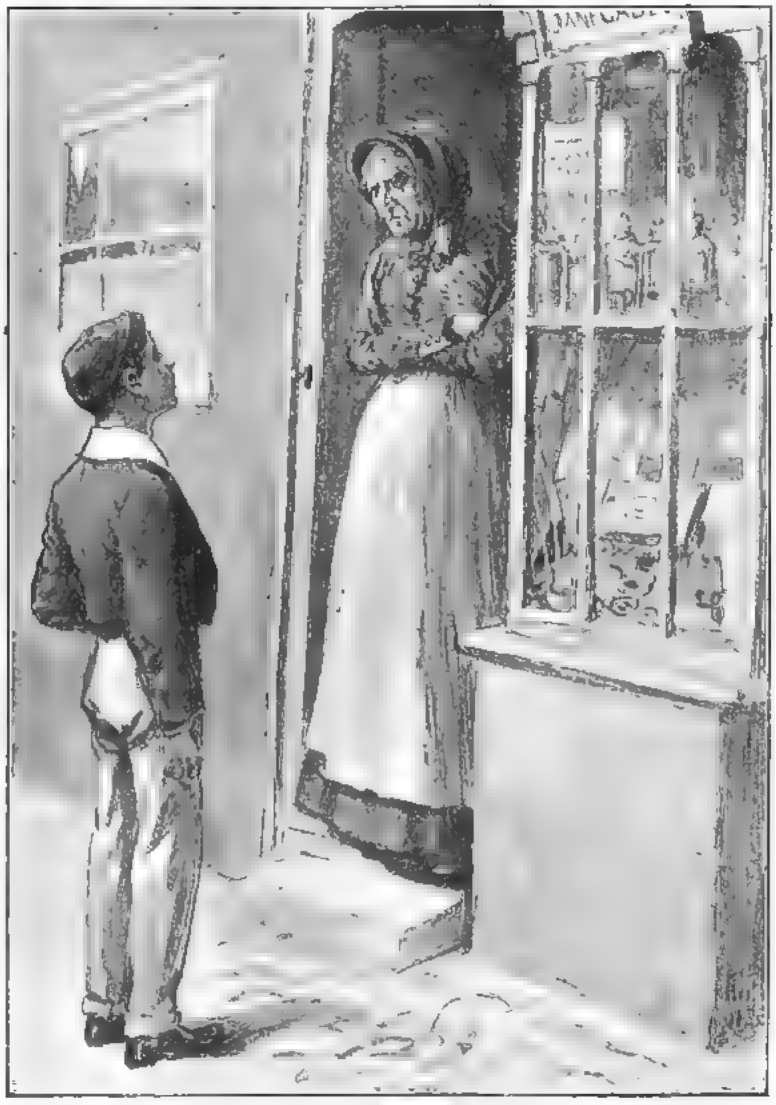
And Parsons, like Mother Cadby, was aware of Phillips' splendid reputation for keeping his word.

II.

I KNOW of few states of mind so unenviable as that of a small boy who has earned the dis-

pleasure—even the hatred—of a vindictive big fellow of bullying propensities. The small boy knows that the big fellow is biding his time—awaiting a favourable opportunity to wreak his vengeance on the object of his dislike—and the small boy's life consequently becomes an unending stretch of fear and trembling. He is at school—penned in—under the same roof as his persecutor. They probably meet a dozen times a day—and instinct tells the small boy that the big one has *not forgotten*. He is merely waiting.

A fellow like Phillips, had his fag been guilty of a gross breach of duty, would have administered, on the first offence, a few sharp words of rebuke; on the second, a few sharp cuts with a drill-stick. Then it would have been over. But Parsons was made of a different clay. His nature it was to nurse his revenge. Had he been a straightforward fellow, recognizing when he was in the wrong (as he undoubtedly was over this matter), he would have accepted the situation with as good a grace as possible. Viewed in any light, the whole affair was discreditable to him. If he wished to buy an article of so contraband a nature as a packet of cigarettes, he might have bought it himself. True, he had a game leg, but it would not have hurt him to have limped as far as Mother Cadby's. Then again, it would have been bad enough sending Moody on the errand had Moody possessed a pass "down town" from his form-master, but, as it happened, he caused Moody to commit a double breach of rules. Hence his own fault was a most heinous one. He did not wish to come to blows with Phillips, because he had sufficient acquaintance with Phillips' prowess with the gloves to know that it would not be wise to seek further acquaintance with Phillips *without* the gloves. He was not a coward, but he recognized the Captain's superior ability as a boxer.



"WELL, WHAT IS IT?" SHE ASKED SOURLY.

However, Parsons fully intended to get even with Moody, and he at length hit on an idea. It would hurt Moody much more than any physical violence, and at the same time avoid a conflict with Phillips.

Meeting Moody one day in a solitary part of the quad, he hailed him. Moody, having perceived the enemy, had glided behind a pillar, but Parsons' eyes were sharp.

"Come here, Moody."

"Now for it," thought Moody, vaguely wondering whether punishment would be administered by boot or hand. It proved to be worse than that, however. "Why didn't you get those cigarettes for me the other day?"

"Because Phillips told me I wasn't to."

"How did Phillips know they were for me?"

"He heard Mother Cadby say so."

"How did Mother Cadby know?"

"I told her they were for you."

"What on earth did you do that for?"

"Because, before I told her that, she said she hadn't got any cigarettes."

"And so you were mug enough to give me away! I believe you told Phillips, too."

"He heard Mother Cadby say so first" protested Moody. "As Phillips was passing she came out of the shop saying that I was to tell you they were the only sort she had left—and Phillips overheard her."

Parsons knew that this was quite a reasonable and probably a truthful version of the affair—but he preferred not to recognize it as such. He caught hold of Moody's ear and gave it a twist. Moody set his teeth and prepared to take his licking like a man. To his surprise, however, Parsons let him go. But the relief was only momentary.

"I haven't time to lick you now," said Parsons, "it must wait. Probably it'll have to wait till Last Day. Yes, I think it must keep till then. Something for you to look forward to. If you say anything about it to Phillips you'll get a double dose."

With this humane speech Parsons walked away, leaving (as he knew he would) the small boy in a most uncomfortable frame of mind. Moody had only been at Greyhouse a year, but he had heard the familiar rhyme used at the end of every half:

Last Day but Two
Taste my Shoe!
Last Day but One
Take it all in fun!
Last Day—
Pay Day!!!

And *his* licking was to "keep" till Pay Day!

Snow and ice—glorious long slides in the Upper Field—box-packing, train-hunting in Bradshaw, party-forming for travelling purposes, general disorder and confusion, and no one attempting to do a stroke of work, masters as well as boys being full of holiday anticipation, and Christmassy good-fellowship. It was the last day of the winter half—for in those days the school year was not divided into three "terms." It was the last day, and everybody was in the wildest and highest spirits. It promised to be a real old-fashioned Christmas, with plenty of skating and sleighing, and ice, hockey, and snow fort building—not a miserable-snivelling, damp-day-in-April sort of Christmas, as we generally have now-a-years.

And 'twas Pay-Day!

Still, what paying out there was to be done was done good-humouredly—indeed, most of the fellows forgot that they had any paying-out to do. And rightly so, for is not Christmas the "Queen of Feasts," when there is peace on earth and goodwill amongst men—and boys? Surely 'tis a time for hand-shaking and forgiving, for "making up" rows, and forgetting injuries. There must be something wrong about a nature on which the prevailing good-fellowship of Christmas has no effect. To my mind, Christmas Day is the sweetest and best day of the whole year, no matter what the weather may be—though to be sure old Mother Earth looks best in her white cloak, with the holly-berries showing red upon it!

For six weeks young Moody had been brooding over Parsons' threat. When he got out of bed this last morning he shivered; to-day was Pay Day! His chums chipped him about his solemn countenance, but Moody had no banter to exchange for theirs; laugh and merry jest had gone from his lips. *It was Pay Day!*

He stole into Hall for breakfast behind a clump of chattering chums, and slid into his seat hastily, fearful lest he should catch Parsons' eye. After breakfast he did not rush for those glorious long slides with all the rest, but went and hid himself in his class-room. Here, at any rate, thought he, there wouldn't be much risk of encountering Parsons.

But just as Moody had opened the book he was reading, the door was opened, and Parsons looked in. He hesitated on the threshold; then closed the door and went away. He meant to prolong the agony a bit.

No rest for Moody, even in the class-room, thought Moody. So after dinner he mingled with the crowd in the play-box room, and, getting into the darkest corner, began to pack up his play box, taking no pleasure in this usually pleasurable operation.

Suddenly a voice sounded close by his shoulder.

"Moody, go and ask Cripps for a bit of cord, and look sharp."

"All right, Parsons."

Poor Moody ran as fast as his legs could carry him, and came racing back with the cord without wasting a moment.

"There'll be a bit left over for you—to-night," grinned Parsons, roughly taking the cord from the white-faced fag.

Moody hastily finished packing his own box, locked it, and got out of the box-room as soon as he could.

To-night! So Parsons was reserving his licking until the very last thing. On the night of the Last Day there was a theatrical performance in Big School, and after that a bit of a spread in Hall, and then fellows went to bed —much later than usual.

All was turmoil and confusion and romping. Very little attempt on the monitors' part was made to keep order. The very night, of all the nights in the half, for a bully to do his worst.

Moody mooned about at the lower end of the Upper Field long after it was dark. In the distance he could see the fellows sliding in long lines, all as jolly as could be, laughing and jeering when some unlucky chap came a cropper, shouting out warnings to those in front, singing and hallooing — how Moody envied them!

After tea, he went listlessly to his dormitory and put on his best suit, as well as a spotless shirt, tie and collar. Greyhouse made a fine show of clean linen in Big School that night, for many visitors from the neighbourhood had come, and there were heaps of girls, by Jove! So Greyhouse wanted to look its best — and cleanest!

Moody crammed himself away into a corner at the very bottom of the room. Here, at any rate, it wasn't probable that Parsons would see him. Whether Parsons saw him there or not, it is quite certain that Parsons was waiting for him by the great door when the theatricals were over. He made a sign to Moody to follow him, and Moody meekly obeyed.

Arrived in one of the side corridors, Parsons said:—"Go up to your dormitory, and wait till I come."

Nobody saw the two together. Moody was such an unobstrusive little fellow that the other First Form kids didn't miss him in Hall. Besides, it was such a hurly-burly and scramble that it was hard to find anybody, even if one had looked for him.

Moody went slowly upstairs — to the first floor, and then to the second, and then to the third. Here his dormitory was situated. He was quite unstrung by the suspense of the last six weeks, and this last awful Pay Day. He was a weakish chap at the best—not built for roughing it—and he felt pretty well done now.

Parsons was going to lick him! Nobody would hear or see—servants, masters, monitors —not a soul was about in these silent upper regions. Besides, if there had been, he couldn't have sneaked!

A wild longing for escape, flight, anything, rose in Moody's brain. Couldn't he *hide* somewhere?

Half-a sec! There was one room, at the top of the main building, which was never used. There was a rumour that it was haunted, but Moody's fear just now was of a flesh and blood enemy—not ghosts. What if he hid in the haunted room until Parsons had gone to bed? Parsons would never dream of looking for him in that top room.

Listening for all he was worth by the staircase, Moody heard a heavy step on the landing below. *Parsons was coming up!*

It must be the Top Room! There was a bed in it; if the worst came to the worst he could sleep there.

A narrow, winding staircase led to this top room. He raced up the steps, treading very warily, and reached the door of the Top Room, just as Parsons arrived on the landing below.

No good hesitating. *Moody turned the handle, and entered the Top Room, closing the door softly behind him. Now he was safe from Parsons!*

III.

Some twelve years after little Moody took refuge in the Top Room of Greyhouse there was a big gathering of "Old Greys" at the school. Since very early times there had been an "Old Greys' Club," which dined annually in London, issued a printed list of members, and announced the University successes, appointments, promotions, marriages, and deaths of its members in the *Grey*, the magazine of Greyhouse School. This particular year the honorary secretaryship of the club had been taken over by a very energetic gentleman — Mr. Phillips, a master, and an "O.G." himself, having once been head monitor of Greyhouse. Mr. Phillips, with praiseworthy zeal, had used every possible method of whipping up as many old boys as possible for this particular *réunion*, and he had succeeded in getting together quite a little army of them. "Present *v.* Past" was the match, and it was toughly contested, but "Past" brought an International and three Blues, and the boys, though they fought game as pebbles, had to give way before superior odds.

Present Greyhouse, thickly lined along "touch," gazed with awe at *Past* Greyhouse, which was, of course, numerously represented among the spectators. Some were young fellows still at the 'Varsity—whom many present Greys could remember as boys at the school—while others were moustached fellows of thirty, bearded men of forty, and grizzled "paters"

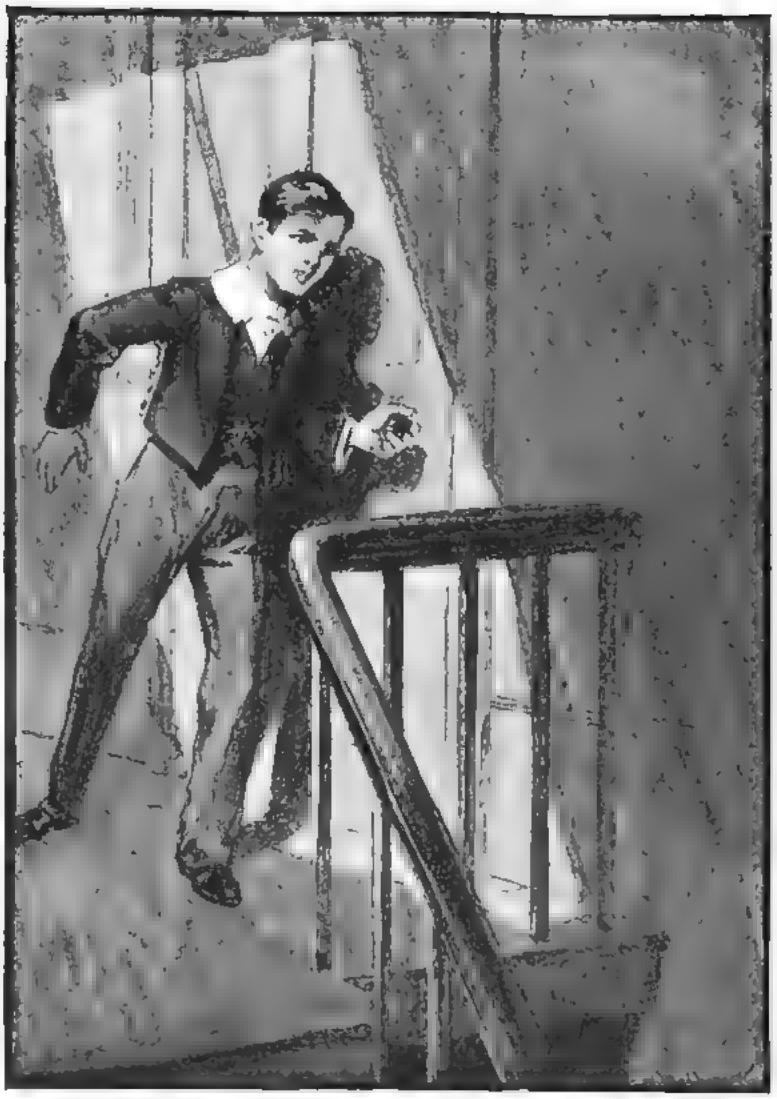
of fifty and sixty. The indefatigable Phillips had enticed down (with carefully-worded invitations) a couple of bishops, an admiral, a cabinet minister, and a judge—all O.G.'s.

Greyhouse had heard that the judge's nickname in police circles was "Hanging Henry," and so Greyhouse awaited his awful lordship's arrival with morbid curiosity, for they understood that his *soubriquet* had been given him on account of the severity with which he dealt with murderers. The school's disappointment, therefore, may be imagined when they found "Hanging Henry" to be a rubicund, jolly old gentleman, who insisted on standing endless tuck to anyone who wanted it, and cracked jokes unceasingly as Present Greyhouse—at his invitation—cheerfully cleared the shop out.

After the match the old boys crowded into the Masters' Common Room, but, there hardly being enough space for them in this quarter, they overflowed into the class-rooms and studies asking Present Greyhouse many questions about prevailing customs, and telling each other anecdotes of times long gone by, and, in a word, enjoying themselves most thoroughly.

The two bishops, after wandering aimlessly about for some time, at length found seats in the First Form class room, and here, to the open-mouthed kids, they related how, half a century or more ago, they were both flogged for making a midnight raid on the gooseberry bushes in the Head's garden!

Phillips was talking to half a dozen men at once in the Common Room, when he observed that some of the men were looking hard at a stranger who had just entered the room.



HE REACHED THE DOOR OF THE TOP ROOM JUST AS PARSONS ARRIVED ON THE LANDING BELOW.

The term "stranger" is not misapplied, for, presumably an old boy, the newcomer looked anxiously about him as if not quite sure as to the welcome which would be accorded him. Nobody recognized him, but so nervous were his movements that very soon everybody was staring at him.

"Hullo!" said Phillips, "who's this? Can't fix him can you?" turning to an old boy who was at Greyhouse during his captaincy.

"Hanged if I can! Looks more like a ghost than a man. George! I never saw a fellow so wasted away in my life. His limbs look like sticks."

Phillips, as organizer and "M.C." of this monster meeting of "O.G's," was obliged to "do the civil" by everybody. So he approached the stranger.

"Excuse me—you are an 'Old Grey'?"

"Yes! yes! I am an Old Grey. Is your name Phillips?"

"Yes; and yours?"

"Mine is Parsons."

"*Parsons!*"

Quite a number of the men present echoed the word. Of course—Parsons! Old Parsons! Certainly they remembered Parsons—one of the best "three-quarters" the school had ever had. Left before anyone thought he would at the end of a winter half. Wrote to some of his chums saying that he had persuaded his pater to let him go to India, instead of returning to Greyhouse, as he had been offered a good billet—on the railway out there. That must have been twelve years ago—just! And not a word had been heard of him or from him since. Rather queer he should turn up suddenly like this, after dropping his old chums for such a length of time! However, here he was, looking more dead than alive, and there was no reason why he should not be made welcome.

Phillips, a contemporary of Parsons', chatted to him for some minutes. He noticed, however, that Parsons still continued to look very nervous and ill-at-ease.

"Look here, old man," said Phillips, "I suppose India knocked you up a bit, eh? Come and sit down and have a drink of some sort. You really look very seedy."

"Oh, I look worse than I really am!" said Parsons, with a ghastly smile, "you see, I lived in the jungle a lot, by myself—at least, I was the only white man in the district. I got fever, and that laid me out, and I was finally invalided home. I met a man at my club in London who told me of this O.G. gathering, so I thought I'd run down. Hope it's all right?"

"Of course it's all right, old fellow. Very glad to see you, and hope English air will buck you up. By the way, a lot of these men are staying the night. Will you?"

Parsons looked strangely agitated.

"Sleep here? No, no! I couldn't! I couldn't sleep at Greyhouse."

"Nonsense! You can't go back to-night. The men bound for town will be off in ten minutes. The rest are sleeping here. I'm sure I can find you a bed. Now, look here, Parsons, you're knocked up—get into that easy-chair till dinner-time. I'll go and see about a bed for you."

Parsons dropped into the chair without a word, and closed his eyes, heedless of the scrutiny he was subjected to by many of the men who had been boys with him at Greyhouse. Personally, Phillips had absolutely forgotten all about the Mother Cadby incident—he simply recognized in Parsons a man who had been at school with him—an O. G.—and therefore one to whom it was his duty to be hospitable.

He went to Mrs. Dolman, the matron—a plump, good-tempered little woman.

"Oh, Mr. Phillips, what a to-do to be sure! Every bedroom is *packed*—and how they'll all dine I don't know. And it's all *your* fault!"

"My dear madam," said Phillips, with a smile, "I am sure you are equal to the emergency. You are never beaten!"

"Flattery!" cried Mrs. Dolman, demurely. "Well, and what is it now! Another bed?"

"Exactly. An old boy has turned up suddenly from India."

"Dear me!" exclaimed the good matron; "they seem to have come from all parts of the globe. There's a missionary from China, and an explorer from Abyssinia, and a gentleman who has been to the North Pole——"

"You must blame the school, Mrs. Dolman," said Phillips, "turns out such good men, you see. They go everywhere, and get to the top."

"The *judge* has been talking to me," said Mrs. Dolman archly, "and I must say he is very nice. What a shame to call him 'Hanging Henry'! He doesn't look as if he could condemn a mouse to death. He has been telling me how he used to come to Greyhouse by stage-coach. He is really a charming old gentleman."

"Until you meet him at Petershall Assizes," laughed Phillips, "when he is the reverse to charming. But, come, Mrs. Dolman, about this bed. I want *one* bed. Only one. Is it to be had?"

Mrs. Dolman reflected.

"There's only the Top Room left," she said; "there's a bed there."

"The Top Room? I thought it was never used now."

"It isn't. But I don't see why it shouldn't be. I don't suppose this gentleman knows that it's supposed to be haunted——"

"I'd forgotten all about that," said Phillips. "What is the story, Mrs. Dolman?"

"Why," said the matron, with bated breath, "I thought everybody knew it. Years and years ago a boy who was made to 'run the gauntlet' died there. It was used as a sick room before the hospital was built. Well, it was said that this boy haunted it."

"Oh!" cried Phillips. "I remember now. Wasn't that the room in which poor little

Moody died? Yes, that was very sad. He was found dead, sitting on the bed, completely dressed, and staring into one of the corners. It was never known why he didn't sleep in his own dormitory that night, nor why he went to the Top Room. He was my fag—so I have cause to remember the occurrence."

"That was before I came here," said Mrs. Dolman, "but I have heard a tale about a boy who was found dead in that room on the morning of a breaking-up day, years ago. And he was your fag, Mr. Phillips?"

"My fag! And a dear little chap! He was too fragile for Greyhouse. I think, for my own part, that he hid there, and then, remembering the tale about the room, *imagined* that he saw the ghost that was supposed to haunt it. Anyhow, that's neither here nor there. *I* don't believe it's haunted, and I don't suppose this gentleman from India will even remember that Greyhouse had a haunted room. He left the school twelve years ago."

"Do you want me to have a bed made up there?" asked Mrs. Dolman.

"Yes, if you will be so kind."

"Very well, Mr. Phillips. Fortunately, none of the maids have heard anything of this nonsense, although they know the room isn't used. I'll have a bed made up, and I daresay the gentleman will spend a very good night there, and laugh at the idea of a ghost when you tell him in the morning that he slept in a 'haunted room.'"

"That's about it," said Phillips cheerily; "of course, I shan't breathe a word to him about it to-night. I shall simply show him to his room in the ordinary way."

"Very well," said Mrs. Dolman, "I will have the bed made up."

IV.

After dinner the old boys who were sleeping at Greyhouse School that night sat round the Common Room fire, talking of old times. Parsons alone was silent, At intervals he lit a a fresh cheroot, and smoked feverishly. As in many like cases, tobacco was his only solace—his only friend.

The majority of the "O. G.'s," laughing and chatting over by-gone days, did not pay particular attention to this haggard fellow. The average athlete has very little sympathy with those of his fellows who enjoy (parodoxical phrase!) indifferent health. Parsons' contemporaries regarded him with pity, largely mingled with contempt. Poor chap! quite broken up! great pity! such a fine fellow as he was once upon a time!

Phillips, more thoughtful than the rest, suggested to Parsons that he should make a fourth at the whist table. Parsons accepted the invitation with feverish alacrity, but threw his *vis-à-vis* into a state of despair—he being the kind of man that takes whist in grim earnest—by revoking, trumping tricks already won by his partner, and committing other heinous crimes. At the end of the rubber the other three rose with a sigh of relief that was quite pathetic.

The men dropped off to bed one by one. At length, as the great school clock boomed out the midnight hour, Phillips and Parsons found themselves alone.

"Well, old man," said Phillips, with a healthy yawn, "it's time we were trotting. Your room's just over mine—I'm on the third floor. You're about the only man who's got a room to himself."

Parsons looked as if he would like to sit up for another hour or two, but he recognized the fact that he must keep school hours—as far as the Common Room was concerned. With the exception of Phillips and himself, Greyhouse was slumbering.

"All right," he said. "Show me the way, will you? It's twelve years since I was here, you know."

"Ah, so it is," said Phillips, lighting a couple of candles; "just twelve years."

Phillips turned off the gas in the Common Room, and the two men, after passing through several corridors on the ground floor, came to the private staircase that was used by the masters. They went up.

"This is my room," said Phillips, softly opening the door. "You see, I've already got a man sleeping in my bed, or I could have put you in it. I'm dossing on the floor myself. However, you're fixed up all right. Come on!"

Chancing to look at Parsons he noticed that his companion was deadly pale—paler than was his wont. However, he put this down to fatigue.

They ascended the narrow staircase.

"Here you are!" said Phillips. "Snug little crib, eh? Well, good-night, old chap. Hope you'll feel a bit better in the morning."

"Good-night," said Parsons, walking into the Top Room.

As he did so he dropped his candlestick.

"Hullo!" said Phillips. "Hand a bit shaky? Here, take mine. There, that's all right! If you feel queer in the night, just hammer on the floor with your boot, and I'll come up. Good-night!"

So saying, he shut the door on Parsons, and went to his own room, where, with some overcoats and blankets, he had made himself up a

bed. He turned into this, and soon dozed off. How long he slept he never knew, for of a sudden he was aroused by a frantic hammering overhead. Shaking off his coverings Phillips lit his candle, hurried up the little staircase, and into the Top Room.

The sight that met his eyes he never forgot—he never will forget.

Standing by the side of the bed, his skeleton form shaking within the long white night-dress which Phillips had borrowed for him, stood Parsons.

"What's the matter?" cried Phillips.

"Look — look!" almost screamed Parsons. "See—just there!"

"I see nothing," said Phillips.

"Look — it is there! Didn't the bed stand there twelve years ago? Look! It's — *it's Moody!*"

"I can't see anybody,' said Phillips, soothingly "Come — get into bed, old chap!"

"Hush!" cried Parsons, "or he will hear us! Look—he is watching us! Hush—I'll tell you! I was going to thrash him the last night of that half—and he hid here. I was going to thrash him because he told you he was buying cigarettes for me. He hid in here. Oh, I can't bear his eyes! He is looking at me! He hid here—in the morning he was—found dead!"

"Come down to my room," said Phillips, grasping the other's arm. "Come down! You're not well."

Parsons laughed. Phillips shuddered.

"He hid here from me . . . Nobody knew . . . I couldn't come back . . . I saw him when he was found . . . I went to India . . . I saw his face there . . . I have always seen it . . . When I had fever it looked at me all the time. . . . See—it is there now . . . He thinks I'm going to lick him . . . Look—he's coming towards me . . . Look—he's touching me!" And, with a scream of terror, Parsons fell down dead.

"SEE—IT IS THERE NOW . . . ."

There is no Top Room now at Greyhouse. The staircase leading to what was once the Top Room has been bricked up.

(THE END.)

[The concluding tale of this series will appear next month.]

GAMES THAT GIRLS CAN PLAY.

Boys stranded at home, with no male companions, are at the mercy of their sisters for athletic society. I open the subject from the male point of view because girls are never stranded at home. It may be worth while to say a few words about the games that girls can play; this, for the sake of the stranded brother.

At this time of the year the game one thinks of first is football. This may be very briefly dismissed; it is obviously not an appropriate game for girls, or for mixed games. Football matches, side against side, unless sugared to such an extent as not to be football at all, are at once too acrobatic and too rough. The lady footballers who played exhibition matches a few years ago were not exactly a success. But I must admit I have seen the game played by a mixed party, in the form of a miniature kick-about with a small-size ball, and—well, it was all right, and rather fun. I knew, too, of an ingenious youth, very fond of football, who managed to engage his sisters. He put up two goal-posts on a lawn and stretched some strawberry netting (about which the gardener said a word or two) across all but the lower 3ft. of the goal-mouth; he also put three sisters in goal behind the net, telling them to do the best they could with their feet. He then practised shooting, much to his own satisfaction; and the goalers did not seem to mind, except when he shot crooked and they had to fetch the ball. But girls do not, I think, care for football much in any shape; those that want to try it merely do so because their brothers estimate the game highly.

The games that for girls take the place of football are hockey and lacrosse. In the important girls' schools, such as St. Andrew's, Wycombe Abbey, and Roedean, which are modelled upon public-school lines, and which are an unqualified success, cricket is the summer game, and hockey and lacrosse the winter games. These three games are, I believe, each in season compulsory, and the girls are not allowed to play other games during the time assigned to them. But the girls themselves regard cricket, hockey, and lacrosse, as superior to other games, and would devote their attention chiefly to them of their own accord. The organization at these schools is excellent, and the games are properly played. The success of the new system of educating girls has killed for ever the groundless but common idea that girls cannot play games—really play them—without becoming hoydens. I defy anyone to detect the slightest difference in point of gentleness and refinement between the girls from the new schools and those formed by the older and more conventional education. The new education does not produce the New Woman, but woman essentially the same as she always is, when she is good; the novelty consists in using a process that is at once more free, more sane, and more healthy. But I digress.

Hockey is, of course, a first-rate game. Look at the good sportsmen who play it, if you are ignorant, and doubt. Mr. A. E. Stoddart, for instance, who represented England both at cricket and football, and is a scratch-golfer, regards it as a splendid and all but equal substitute for his great games. Who shall say that the confirmed hockey player is not right in claiming that his game has no superior? Really, hockey is nothing less than Association football played with sticks instead of feet. Charging barred, there is the same need of accuracy, judgment, dash, and combination, and the same

"fast and open" play in each. A celebrated American athlete I met the other day told me he admired the Association game immensely. "Such a grand, quick, free game," he said. The same criticism applies to hockey. Hockey has been brought to a high pitch of excellence by the chief clubs. As for how girls play, read this extract from the *Lorettonian* :—

I went yesterday to see the Ladies' Hockey Match—Yorkshire *v.* Lancashire. I wish you had been there. You could not wish for a faster game, or a better played. The forward combination was beautiful; but best of all was to see the girls letting themselves go with might and main into a game, just as if they were boys. The shinty we used to play at school is a muddled mob compared to this game. There was no compunction about their play, I can tell you. When one of the backs went in to stop a rush, it was a case of "Smite and spare not!" Feet, or shins, or the ball, it did not matter a rap; but they did not ever get rough over it. Is the Persian King's saying about to come true? "My men have become women and my women men."

Lorettonians know what games are, so there is no doubt girls can play hockey. Good mixed hockey, then, is clearly possible; brothers and sisters might play the game together with splendid results. But those who only know rough, elementary hockey should not join in the game till they have mastered the up-to-date rules and their application. Wild hockey is as rough as football and far more dangerous.

Lacrosse is every bit as good a game as hockey. Might one describe it as aërial hockey with no off-side rule? It is the native game of the North American Indians. Inter-tribal matches are all but battles; the squaws assist by swishing their males into dash and energy. The game is difficult, but is well played by the girls of St. Andrew's and like schools. At some schools it is made the chief game of the Easter term, hockey being played in the Christmas term; at others the two are concurrent. Where there are sufficient sisters adepts at the game there is a grand chance for them to initiate brothers; the latter, as a rule, do not know the game. But lacrosse is not widely played, and its chances as a mixed game are not very bright. However, girls have proved they can play it well. With slight modifications in the direction of rendering the game easier much might be made of it. It is worth noting that, if mixed games are played, in hockey or lacrosse the most successful arrangement is for the boys to be as far as possible confined to the defence; but, in any case, the boys should occupy more or less the same places on each side.

As for cricket, I have splendid things to say of the way girls might play this great game. To begin with, heaps of girls play cricket nowadays, and most of them are not half bad at it. Some of them are real cricketers, who not only can play, but also know a deal about the game. Of my girl correspondents, nine out of ten ask questions about cricket. One of them is a ripper; she makes runs, takes wickets, and is better up in the theory of the game than most boys. Cricket at the girls' schools is most flourishing. As in the case of hockey and lacrosse, not only inter-house but inter-school matches are played. Boys have an idea that girls' cricket is humbug. A gross error this. Girls can bat really well—a good girl player quite as well as the average boy—and, as far as I can see, there is nothing whatever to prevent girls reaching the same excellence in cricket as they have reached in hockey and golf. And, mind you, a good lady-golfer is pretty good. I used to think no girl could possibly bowl decently. I was wrong. The very nice girl in Mr. Snaith's story, "Willow the King" (and such a good story too!), is a possibility. She is a remarkable slow bowler. Now I may tell you in confidence that I have had about fifteen minutes' batting practice nearly every fine morning this winter, have learnt a good deal about playing on sticky wickets, and have been bowled out on an average once a day; and my bowler is—a "sister." And I vow I would rather have a couple of overs from her before going in to bat in a county match than from any professional; good length, slow medium, and quick off the pitch.

So, ye brothers, there is cricket practice to be had at home. As to girls' batting, I would like to say an emphatic word. It would be five times as good as it is if they were properly taught. As it is, they—and most boys, too—are taught nothing but how to play forward, and they know no other stroke. This is sheer cruelty. The things to learn are (1) how to play back at good-length balls (*vide* my articles in back numbers), (2) how to hit over-pitched balls, (3) how to pull short balls. If you doubt me, write to "Ranji," and ask his opinion. Forward play is useful, but it carries you nowhere by itself, and it is most difficult to master. Anyone, on the contrary, can learn back play in a few hours; while to hit an over-pitched ball with a free, straight bat is ever so easy, compared with correct forward play. Girl-bats are chiefly concerned with slow bowling. No great batsmen play forward at slow bowling if they can help it; they either hit with a full drive or play back. And, if you'll believe it, girls are taught not to pull slow short balls! Why, what else can be done with them? Certain fours, too, every one. Girls should be taught to watch the ball—the great secret of all good play—and to play with straight bats, except in pulling short balls. They would get runs then—simply lots.

Forward play as a refuge and a stand-by is an exploded fallacy—ye coaches, do not teach girls that to play forward correctly is the be-all and end all of batting; the error is ruination. Brothers, you can make good bats of your sisters if you try, and good bowlers, too. The advantage of the latter accomplishment is obvious. But the cricket advice I see sometimes given in girls' magazines almost makes me weep. By the way, all girls with any sense wear gymnastic clothes, nowadays, for cricket. You cannot play cricket in a long voluminous skirt; I have tried, just to see—you really cannot.

Golf is, all round, I think, the best game there is for girls. It is a game of the first rank, and it can be played by quite grown-up girls, and for a long time after that stage of growth is reached. Hockey, lacrosse, and cricket, with all their merits, are better games for school-girls than for grown-ups. The degree of excellence some ladies have attained in golf proves that the game is completely within the power of their sex; and there is nothing in the game to offend even the old-world sense of feminine fitness. The apprenticeship is rather long and arduous, but the prize of proficiency is well worth striving for. If any girl told me she was fond of out-door games and sports, and asked me which she had better take up, I should tell her:—Golf as a game, fly-fishing as a sport. Single-handed golf matches between men and women are not much good, though, of course, not to be despised—on men's links the man's driving upsets the balance, and on a ladies' links the holes are generally too short. The best mixed golf is a foursome on full-sized links. It may be mentioned that the best lady golfers are almost perfect in their short approaching and putting; they have a fineness of "touch" rarely possessed by even the best men players. Brothers cannot do their sisters a greater kindness than to teach them the sound rudiments of golf.

In conclusion, I should like to say that modern croquet—not the old bang-about, but modern croquet—demands a high degree of skill and knowledge, and is a grand game. People who despise croquet are simply ignorant. Also, I may add, that mixed doubles at lawn tennis ar always spoilt if the men play consistently to beat the opposite lady. All mixed games call for a certain tact. *Verb. sap.*

C. B. F.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

G. Stewart.—In Law 8 it is expressly stated that the goal-keeper may be changed during the game, but notice of such change must first be given to the referee. Therefore, a captain may change his goaler as often as he likes, provided he notifies as the law directs. If he wishes to make a temporary alteration for a penalty kick, there is nothing to prevent him. But why? Surely the usual goaler, having most experience in the position, is the most likely man on a side to save the situation. Law 15 lays it down expressly that the goal keeper may not advance more than five. from the goal-line. He may do what rushing he likes within this limit. The blowing of the whistle does not suspend the operation of this law. Why should it? I am glad to answer your questions, the more so because to judge from the size of my budget. Christmas books seem to monopolize the market just now. But, friend, why do you not read the laws of the game? They are not perfect (*vide* the sporting press *passim*) but they are fairly explicit. **D. G. G. B.**—Leather cricket bags do not, as far as I know, need oil. Mine has existed in a portable and useful condition for just ten years without it; and its career is by no means over. Of course, linseed oil imparts a deeper hue to leather; so does harness or brown-boot polish. The last, for choice. Varicose veins are a plague. Many first-class athletes suffer from them. You should let a doctor see them. If they are not bad he will probably tell you to wear an elastic stocking while playing. If they are bad, he will want to cut them out. I do not know whether cold water is detrimental to varicose veins. Be wise and consult a doctor, and follow his advice. **Novice.**—(1) Running shoes made of thin leather with a thin leather sole furnished with spikes are far superior to rubber shoes. The latter are really a handicap on grass tracks; better run with bare feet. (2) No, a short walk is all you should do the day before sports. Individuals differ in the matter of sleep. Be in bed by 10.30 p.m., and out of it by 7.30 a.m. Then you'll do. **Graham Skillen.**—Glad to hear from you again. No reason whatever why you should not arrange your exercises as you propose. Mind, though, not to overdo the game. By all means practise with a stone of 5lbs. or 8lbs., but a roundish lump of metal is preferable. Bad luck missing the soldiers! No doubt you like Canada better. But I fancy you are the sort that is fairly happy anywhere. Best wishes to you. **Wigan.**—No man by taking thought can propheay another's eventual cubits. But I fancy you'll end a six footer. That is, if you neither smoke nor drink, nor do anything else deleterious. Your figures prove you an extra well-grown specimen. Yes; I think His Highness might oblige. Tell him you are a friend of mine, and enclose a post-card addressed to yourself, with a piece of paper gummed on to receive the signature. **C. E. L.** (Tongala).—The professional you mention has a sports shop, I think, but the amateur is in a firm of wine merchants. Your letter interested me much; it was kind of you to write it and to send a jolly Christmas card. The chap that bowls to you and to the office-boy is clearly a rattling good sort. Perhaps I shall meet you and him and the office boy some day. I hope I shall. That tie match was certainly very bad luck indeed. You would likely have won with one more ball. But if it was time the umpire was quite correct. Most likely you will bang out-grow your ill-health and turn out a big strong man—like Sammy Woods. You might write again some time, and tell me how you are getting on. THE CAPTAIN regards with favour the kind of boy you appear to be.

C. B. F.

KINGLAND is an island in the Atlantic, which is avoided by mariners on account of the perilous currents abounding in its vicinity. In fact, only one ship calls there *per annum*. The inhabitants rely for food and clothing, etc., entirely on the contents of derelicts which drift on to their shores. In Kingland, the King only reigns one year, and every man has his turn. King Waterbottle is a waiter who takes very unwillingly to the throne; so, as his twin brother is expected home from England by the annual ship, the Chancellor and Commander-in-Chief propose to dethrone Waterbottle and put his brother in his place. Waterbottle at first agrees to this proposition, but later repents him of his offer to abdicate, chiefly because his *fiancée*, a waitress named Buzzie, has a great desire to be Queen of Kingland. Enraged by Waterbottle's change of mind, the Chancellor and Commander-in-Chief are sitting up late one night, plotting the monarch's destruction, when the one ship that calls at Kingland is driven ashore a complete wreck, and Waterbottle's twin brother is flung on to the beach. The Chancellor and his fellow-conspirator find him there, convey him to the Chancellor's house, and put him to bed, keeping the fact of their discovery a dead secret. The Commander-in-chief then forges a letter in the rescued man's handwriting, in which, supposing himself about to be drowned, he bids farewell to King Waterbottle. Placing the letter in a bottle, the Commander-in-Chief deposits the bottle on the beach. In the morning it is discovered there by the islanders, who loudly mourn the death of the King's brother. That night the Chancellor drugs the King and his brother, and changes them about, laying Augustus Waterbottle (the brother) in the King's bed, and hiding the King in a cellar. On the following morning Hag Haggety and Buzzie restore the occupant of the King's bed to consciousness by pouring boiling hot coffee down his throat—and discover, by the colour of his eyes, that he is an impostor. Buzzie faints away on discovering that the man is not her betrothed.

CHAPTER IX.

THE ARMY MEETS WITH A REVERSE.

"WHAT a peck of troubles!" moaned Hag Haggety, laying Buzzie's inanimate form on the floor. "There, poor darling! rest like that a bit while I fetch something to bring you round."

And she toddled off to her medicine cupboard in the other room.

Hag Haggety had not been gone a minute, when Augustus Waterbottle sat up, yawned, blinked, and looked about him.

"Well, I nevah!" he ejaculated; "what peculiah quartahs!"

Proceeding to take further stock of his surroundings, his eye fell on Buzzie. Force of habit caused him to feel for his eye-glass; but he couldn't find it, the Chancellor having annexed it on the previous evening. "Doocid strange—doocid—ah—wum! I wemembah being washed off that howwid wet deck into the howwid wet sea, and the next thing I remembah was waking up and finding myself with two old fossils who looked as if they'd walked out of a pantomime. I now awake to find—now who on earth is *this?*"

For at that moment Hag returned. The two treated each other to a long stare.

"Good morning!" said Augustus Waterbottle, thinking it best to be polite. "Delightful weathah!"

"How d'you feel?" roughly demanded Hag, bending over him.

"With the exception of a most unusual warmth in my—ah—my intewiah, I feel very well indeed, thank you."

Hag smiled grimly. Small wonder he felt warm in the interior!

Hag sat down on the bed.

"Now, look you here, young man—before I feteh that young lady out of her swoon just you tell me who you are and what brings you here. You're not King Waterbottle!"

"I have every reason to—ah—to believe," he replied, "that my name is Waterbottle, and that I am King of a place called Kingland."

"It's a lie!" screamed Hag. "You don't talk like the King. You don't talk quite like a gentleman, but as if you wished to be taken for one."

"You are a vewy wude old woman," said Augustus. "I think you had better go away and not ask me any more questions. And please take—ah—take that young person away, too."

Hag raised Buzzie from the floor, and half-lifted, half-dragged her out of the room. She had just deposited the girl on her own bed, when there was a tramp of feet outside, and the Army marched into the Palace—without knocking.

It was accompanied by the Lord Chancellor and the Commander-in-Chief.

"Halt!" cried the last-named.

The Army halted badly. There was not an atom of smartness in the way it obeyed the order. Corporal Job Jones, after his overnight acrobatics, looked exceedingly careworn; the islanders, too, in arresting him, had closed up one of his eyes and broken his nose. Private Tear appeared to be a little damaged, for when Corporal Jones fell on a man he generally left a *souvenir* of his weight behind him in the shape of a broken rib or some internal injury. Private Hooligan also seemed a little out of joint, Major So-So having dropped on him heavily when he was dispatched on his aërial journey by Mr. Jones. Altogether, the Army was not in its best fighting form, by any means.

Hag surveyed her visitors with scorn.

"Thank you for coming in to see me," she said, "its the same way out, I may tell you."

"Mrs. Haggety," said the Chancellor, "a word with you."

"A hundred thousand if you like," was Hag's obliging reply.

"My business," continued the Chancellor, "is to demand your reason for tampering with, firstly, his Majesty the King——"

"Long live the King!" cried the Army, very feebly.

"Secondly, with my wife——"

"Long live the Lord Chancellor's wife!" cheered the Army (by order).

"She's lived a good long time already," remarked Hag, "although she says she's only thirty-three."

"Thirdly, with my daughter——"

"Long live the Lord Chancellor's daughter!" was the Army's weak cry.

"You don't mention the poor child's *father*," Hag sarcastically observed to the soldiers.

"Long live the good Lord Chancellor!" bawled the Army.

"Please keep those men quiet," the Chancellor testily requested the Commander-in-Chief. The Commander-in-Chief cuffed the head of the man nearest to him, and said, "Pass it on!" Each man passed on the cuff with spiteful vigour (for the Army was feeling very ill-tempered), but when Corporal Job Jones received his cuff, he promptly floored the man who cuffed him—poor little Private Tear, to wit.

"Jones!" exclaimed the Commander-in-Chief, "how dare you!"

"'E shouldn't 'it me on my bad ear, then," retorted the Corporal sullenly.

"Consider yourself confined to barracks for a week!" thundered the Commander-in-Chief.

"Oh, orl right!" said Corporal Jones, "if it's to be that, I leave the Army. Fust I'm given summut in my sleep, which makes me feel as if I'd swallowed a volcany—I wish I noo 'oo done it!—then I'm bound with cords and sat on; and then I'm 'it over my bad ear by a bit of a boy 'oo never ought to have joined the Army as long as there was a perambulater to wheel! After that I'm confined to barracks—no fear, Commander, I leave, that's what I do! I'm tired of such a silly game!"

"Keep him in a good temper," hastily whispered the Chancellor. "We want all our troops—can't spare a man."

"Jones," said the Commander-in-Chief, "I have decided to look over your offence for this once. I forgot that you were not feeling well. Private Tear," he added, glaring at the Corporal's castigator, "why didn't you remember that Jones had a bad ear?"

"I—d-don't know," whimpered poor little Tear. "I d-don't want to be a soldier any more. I'd much rather go home and t-take the washing round."

"Or the baby out for a walk," added Hag Haggety.

The Chancellor now saw his way to create a diversion.

"Seize that woman!" he cried, pointing at Hag.

"Seize her, men!" added the Commander-in-Chief, drawing his sword. He did not, however, take his place at the head of the gallant band If anything, he edged away from Hag, who was looking dangerous.

"Altogether," cried the Chancellor, encouragingly, "go for her altogether! Go on!—double beer for a month if you succeed! Take her—dead or alive!"

The Army roused up a little at the mention of "beer." After all, thought the Army, it was only a feeble old woman, not a man.

Hag, however, was before them in her assault. Hurrying to her medicine cupboard, she plucked from the bottom shelf a large jar. It was the work of a moment to snatch a handful of brown powder out of the jar and fling it in the faces of the soldiers. Another handful was divided between the Lord Chancellor and the Commander-in-Chief.

"Seize her—" began the Chancellor, "seize her—seize—a—a—tish—atish—ATISHOO!!"

It was snuff!

"Be brave," yelled the Commander-in-Chief, waving his sword, "be—be—a—a—tish—atish—ATISHOO!!!"

"It's only an old woman," said the Chancellor, wiping his eyes, "only an o—o—a—a—a—tish—ATISHOO!!!"

"SO MUCH FOR THE ARMY!" CRIED HAG, MAKING A TRIUMPHANT EXIT.

And simultaneously the Army gave a gigantic "ATISHOO!!!"

"We would," replied Job Jones, "if we c—c—a—a—tish—atish—ATISHOO!!!"

"It's our noses that stop us," whimpered Private Tear. "We can't help sn—sn—a—a—tish—atish—ATISHOO!!!"

"Gineral, darling," said Private Hooligan, speaking-very-quickly-to-get-it-all-out-before-the-next-sneeze, "It's me eyes is full av sn—sn—sn—a—a—tish—atish—ATISHOO!!!"

And all the Army again said "ATISHOO!!!"

The Commander-in-Chief, taken by a paroxysm of sneezing, brandished his sword irresponsibly and very nearly cut off Corporal Job Jones' head. The corporal warded off the blow with his poleaxe and knocked the sword out of his superior officer's hand. Then he leaned against the wall, and gave himself up to sneezing.

Meanwhile, Hag supplied them liberally with snuff, flinging it at them with well directed aim, and keeping them sneezing until they were so exhausted that they would have found it difficult to arrest a fly.

"So much for the Army!" cried Hag, making a triumphant exit.

The hurricane of sneezing gradually subsided. As, at the end of a display of fireworks, you may sometimes see a left-over squib fizzing its little heart out all by itself, so, on this occasion, Private Tear had a quiet, final sneeze after the others had finished. He looked apologetically round, as much as to say: "You see, gentlemen, my nose is more susceptible than your noses—pray excuse it!" Whatever he did or said, it is a fact that nobody took any notice of him or his last little "atishoo!"

For some minutes after the tickling in his nostrils had ceased, Corporal Job Jones stood with his mouth expectantly open—quite decided in his own mind that Hag Haggety was a witch. It may be added that this opinion was shared by the whole Army.

Private Hooligan slowly wiped his eyes with his coat sleeve, and remarked: "Bhoys, can ye tell me whither the back of me head's in the front or the front av it at the back?"

Being stone-deaf he did not wait for an answer, but went to Hag's looking-glass to see if his helmet was on straight—for he was the dandy of the Army and very particular about his appearance.

By the looking-glass there was a curtain, and behind this curtain was situated Hag Haggety's couch. A sudden agitation of the curtain attracted Mr. Hooligan's attention. Mr. Hooligan (still busily arranging his helmet) watched the curtain sideways.

Then there came an exclamation:

"Oh! where am I? What has happened?"

The curtain was pulled aside, and Buzzie—pale and trembling—stood before the Army.

"So *there* you are, my love!" cried Major So-So, striding towards her. "This is well met indeed."

What with the scalding his face had received at Hag's hands, and what with the sneezing, and what with the battering he had been treated to on the previous night by his comrade-in-arms, the major did not look quite the sort of man to put a maid's heart in a flutter.

"Go away!" cried Buzzie. "I hate you!"

"No more nonsense!" cried the major; "you are mine, and mine you shall remain."

Buzzie's frightened eyes glanced from face to face—looking for a friend. The Chancellor showed his green teeth in a grin of spite; the Commander-in-Chief surveyed her with contempt; Private Tear gaped foolishly at her and felt for his moustache. But as he hadn't got one, he stroked his upper lip instead. The other soldiers—with the exception of Corporal Job Jones, who, with his mouth open, was still waiting for another sneeze to come—shrugged their shoulders in a way that plainly said: "It's no business of ours."

Stay—there was one man who looked as if he would befriend a helpless woman. Private Hooligan was of Irish descent, and everybody knows that an Irishman prides himself on his gallantry in all matters pertaining to the fair sex.

"Save me!" cried Buzzie, darting behind Mr. Hooligan.

"Begorra, but it's a purty little bird!" he exclaimed. "Ah, me darling, what is the matter? Tell be arl about it!"

And with the best intentions in the wur-r-ld, he slipped his arm round Buzzie's waist. Although he could not hear a word she said, he could see that his services, as a gentleman, were needed.

"If you please," said Buzzie, tearfully, "that horrid man wants me to marry him. But I am engaged to the King——"

"Long live the——" began the other soldiers, more from force of habit than because they wanted poor Waterbottle to live a long time.

"Silence, dogs!" thundered the Commander-in-Chief. There was a sullen murmur.

"'Oo are you callin' a dog?" inquired Corporal Jones, who had at last closed his mouth. "Call me a dog again, and I leave!"

"Come, Hooligan, no more of this tom-foolery," said the Chancellor. "So-So is quite right—the girl does belong to him."

Hooligan understood his officer's gestures.

"Do you?" he asked Buzzie.

"No!" said Buzzie, emphatically, "I do not."

"Well," said Hooligan, who had watched her lips shape the negative, "she ought to know best, my lord. There's no forced marriages in Kingland, my lord, or bedad! I'd marry her mesilf!"

"Oh, I'm sure you wouldn't," said Buzzie, "you are too good and generous to do that, sir."

The other soldiers laughed hoarsely. The idea of Hooligan's being good and generous had never occurred to them before. But Buzzie's distress had touched the Irishman. He did not know why the others were so amused—but he guessed it was at his expense.

"Its larfin' ye are, ye spalpeens! I'll make some of ye larf out er the back of yer necks if ye don't be careful. Now, my dear, the matter can be easily settled. The King is in the other room—he will say whether you belong to him or not."

"He announced our betrothal in the market-place, before all the people!" cried Buzzie.

"It is not quite usual," sneered the Chancellor, "for the King of Kingland to announce his betrothal in the market-place. However, the question can soon be settled. I will myself go to the King, and inquire of him whether your statement is correct."

"As the young lady is in rather a ork'ard position, my lord," said Hooligan, "perhaps I'd better see her home?"

"Certainly not," returned the Chancellor, "let her sit down and wait."

"But the King is *not* in there!" cried Buzzie, frantic with terror. "It is a man just like him, but not the King."

"The young woman is mad," said the Lord Chancellor, "I advise you to guard her closely."

And with this he went into the inner room.

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CHAPTER X

WHY THE CHANCELLOR CHUCKLED.

WHEN Hag Haggety, taking Buzzie with her, had retired to her own part of the palace,

Augustus Waterbottle, with that equanimity of temperament which characterised all his actions, turned over and went to sleep again. If a King, thought he, couldn't have as long a sleep as he liked, who could?

He awoke to find a strange figure, in robes and a wig, leaning over him.

"Hullo, why it's the pantomime gentleman again!" exclaimed Augustus. "Vewy effective make up, must say. Wather odd he should wear it all this way from Dwuwy Lane, though!"

"I do not care to know what a pantomime is," said the Lord Chancellor, "but I should like to hear when your Majesty would be pleased to start murdering. I have a cabman in prison whom your Majesty might begin with."

"Eh?—muwdewing!" exclaimed Augustus, sitting up.

"In the English newspapers I have seen," explained the Chancellor, "it seems that English gentlemen—and kings, I presume—set booby-traps by day, and murder by night."

Augustus stopped half-way through a guffaw. "What English newspaper have you been weading, may I ask?"

"It is called," said the Chancellor with dignity, "*Snippity Snimkins*. Its price is a halfpenny, and it comes out once a week. On the outside are pictures of Englishmen amusing themselves by playing practical jokes, while inside are to be found illustrations of Englishmen in a more tragic mood—killing each other, etc."

Augustus restrained his mirth, as he said:—"I will begin muwdewing this afternoon. You can bwing the cabman here, and leave an axe handy. I pwefer to do it with an axe."

The Chancellor shuddered.

"Is murdering an occupation generally followed by the highly-educated in England?" he inquired.

"Well, I won't go so far as to say that," replied Augustus, "the young gentlemen who came into my shop at Eton banged each other about a largish bit, but they stopped short of actual killing."

"Did you say your *shop*?" demanded the Chancellor.

"Yes, I— ah— I was a hairdwesser," said Augustus.

"But I understood from your brother," said the Chancellor, "that you went to England to be *educated* at Heton and Hoxford."

"That was Jack's *kid*," laughed Augustus, forgetting to assume his fashionable drawl, "he was having you on."

"Then you weren't educated at those places?"

"I was—in hairdressing. I followed a lot of my patrons from Eton to Oxford." The smile had vanished from the Chancellor's face. So, after all, this was only a make-believe gentleman—no better, really, than Waterbottle himself. He was disappointed on this tack—now for the other!

"Do you," he inquired, "murder much?"

"Of course not," roared Augustus. "That must have been a comic paper—sort of thing street-boys read. The murdering parts were simply illustrations to stories. You must be a simple old boy to have got hold of *that* pig by the tail."

"He is even a *vulgar* young man when he drops into his natural way of talking," thought the Chancellor. "Dear, dear me! What a trouble all for nothing! Never mind! I will keep him on the throne. That other Waterbottle I will never forgive for all his insults. I will keep him in my cellar for the rest of his days. I'll go and tell him so, too——"

"By the way," said Augustus, breaking in on the Chancellor's cogitations, "what's become of my little brother?"

"I regret to inform you," said the Chancellor, pretending to wipe away a tear, "that your brother was drowned whilst endeavouring to swim out to save you from the wreck."

"What—Jack drowned! What—my brother drowned?"

"Yes, it is the sad truth!" said the Chancellor, producing his handkerchief.

Augustus was silent. To come back to the island of his birth and receive such sad news as a start-off was indeed disheartening. Poor old Jack! Many and many a game had they played on that beach—many a swim enjoyed together in boyhood's happy days. And now he was gone—poor Jack!

"I ought to tell your Majesty," added the Chancellor, speaking in a lower tone, "that the Commander-in-Chief of the Army, one of his staff—Major So-so—and myself are the only persons who are aware of your arrival. Your brother was on the beach with us when your ship was going to pieces on the rocks. Nobody else was there. Now, your Majesty ought to know that your Majesty's brother was very popular among the islanders. If I was to tell them he was drowned whilst endeavouring to save you there would probably be a riot—for they would not believe me—and I fear your Majesty's life would be in danger. So, for the present, I wish you to impersonate your brother—to act as if you were he—and let everything go on as before. You are exactly alike. I will coach you carefully to play the part. Nobody need be any the wiser. See, here are your brother's clothes——"

"No—hang it!—I can't wear poor old Jack's

togs," cried Augustus. "I couldn't! And I don't like your suggestion, old man—and what's more I won't pretend I am Jack!"

"Then," thundered the Lord Chancellor, "your blood be on your own head! The islanders will assassinate you to a certainty—you have no idea what a lawless crew they are!"

"HA! HA! YOU'RE CAGED, MY FINE BIRD!"

"Is it as bad as that?" asked Augustus, uneasily.

"Worse—they'll kill me as well!" returned the Chancellor.

Augustus reflected.

"I must think this over," he said at length, "it's a deucedly awkward situation for a man to be placed in. I wish I'd never come back. Meanwhile, can't you lend me some clothes?"

"You must wear your brother's I am afraid," said the Chancellor; "it's not very nice, but there's no help for it. And now I will leave you to dress. Remember—your life depends on your discretion!"

The Chancellor lifted his hand warningly, bowed, and quitted the royal bed-room. On rejoining the others in the hall his eye fell on Buzzie.

"Oh—the girl's yours, Major So-so," he said, proceeding towards the street-door. "The King declares her tale to be a pack of lies. He is not engaged to her, and says that you are quite welcome to marry her."

As the Chancellor hurried into the street he heard Buzzie scream. He guessed Major So-so was claiming his bride with a strong hand, and so proceeded on his way home, feeling quite satisfied.

Arrived at his house, the Chancellor walked gaily into the kitchen. Seizing the crowbar he used for that purpose, the Chancellor jammed down the spring which worked the stone trap-door. It flew up, disclosing the cellar beneath.

King Waterbottle had recovered from his drugging, and was seated on a wooden bench. It would be hard to describe the abject misery and hopelessness of his position. He was in the demoniacal Chancellor's grasp—there was no chance of escape. He had lost his crown; worse than that, he had lost Buzzie.

The Chancellor lay down on the floor, so that only his head protruded over the opening.

"Ha, ha!" he cried, as Waterbottle looked up at him; "I've got you this time. You're caged, my fine bird, *caged!*"

And the Chancellor chuckled gleefully.

(To be concluded.)

THE STAMP COLLECTOR.

CONDUCTED BY H. M. GOOCH.

"ADVANCE, AUSTRALIA!"

BRITAIN'S philatelist-royal, the Hon. President of the London Philatelic Society, H.R.H. the Duke of York, K.G., is about to visit Australasia, that most magnificent of ocean steamships, the *Ophir*, being entrusted with the welfare of the royal party. That the Duke is more than a stamp collector in name is fully assured, for he takes a keen interest in his stamps, and does not, as so many of our newspapers persist in asserting, contemplate selling his collection.

At the great London Philatelic Exhibition of 1897 the Duke of York visited the Institute of Painters in Water Colours, where the exhibition was being held, twice, and on one occasion was accompanied by H.R.H. the Prince of Wales.

As evidence of the keen interest the Duke of York takes in actual collecting, an incident which occurred during the royal tour of the galleries is noteworthy. The Duchess of York was examining an exhibit of the stamps of Canada, noticing especially the variety of 1851, bearing an excellent portrait of the late Prince Consort. Expressing her astonishment that the late Prince Consort's portrait appeared on the stamps, the Duchess turned to the Duke and inquired if he possessed a copy in his collection. Upon which, with a smile, the Duke of York remarked, "Yes"; adding that it was the 12d. of the same issue he lacked. The Prince Consort stamp is worth, used, about £1; the 12d. black anything under £75!

The royal visit to Australasia is being made at the right time, for, as referred to in my last article, January 1st, 1901, witnessed the consolidation of these important colonies under one federated Government, involving changes not alone political, but philatelic.

Hence our text this month is very appropriate, being taken from the 2½d. New South Wales stamp of the 1891 issue.

Less than ten years ago—about six years—a financial depression made itself felt throughout the Australian Colonies, the philatelic results of which soon became evident in London by the number of Australian collections upon the market. "Sydney Views," or the first issue of New South Wales, which had hitherto risen by leaps and bounds from shillings to pounds, were flooding the auctions, and were obtainable for a mere song. Those with spare cash kept them, and wisely. The depression is past, Imperial Federation is an accomplished fact, commercial prosperity for the Orient colonies is assured, and once again philatelic eyes are upon Australian stamps, and they are booming! "Sydney Views" are no longer to languish without the album, but these varieties, and even the latest issues in addition, bid fair to increase in interest *and* value.

I have so often urged my pupils to give special attention to the stamps of the British Empire, that I think most readers of THE CAPTAIN must have fairly bulky pages in these portions of their Albums; anyway, as one cannot prove this by ocular demonstration, my advice for this lecture is to centralize in urging all readers to, as rapidly as possible, fill out their vacant spaces in the issues of the Australian Colonies during the past ten or fifteen years. Most of them are to be picked up used for a small sum each; but good, clean, and perfect copies should prove an investment, if purchased at a reasonable sum under present catalogue value.

I would especially remind collectors of the New Zealand pictorial issue of 1898. This handsome series of stamps was printed in London, and when completed the stamps, with the plates, were forwarded to the colony. A short time afterwards fresh impressions were taken from the plates locally, resulting in a complex variety of perforations and shades. Then the low values were exchanged in colours, etc., and, at the time of writing, altogether a new issue is in preparation, particulars of which will be found under "New Issues." The various varieties of this issue should some day be classified and priced according to rarity. The error "Wakitipu" instead of "Wakatipu" is not likely to become rare, but as an interesting relic is worth 6d. unused.

Queensland has been tinkering with her stamps ever since 1890—at least eight distinct ½d. stamps alone having been issued in ten years. Reference to an up-to-date catalogue will show an astonishing number of varieties of all the values, from ½d. to 1s., in the issues named. Most of these can be picked up for a small sum; it is well worth an attempt to complete all issues since 1890, in view of coming events. Young collectors would do well to

concentrate their attention on the stamps of all the British Colonies subsequent to 1890.

MAFEKING STAMPS.—WHAT ARE THEY WORTH?

It takes a long time for reliable philatelic news to travel from South Africa, and we are only now receiving accurate information regarding the famous Mafeking stamps—the talk of all and the envy of many. When first the news arrived that provisional stamps had been issued in the beleaguered town, excitement began to be manifested, and this rose to fever heat on the receipt of certain post-marked specimens of the stamps; but the revelations of Mr. A. H. Stamford, in the *London Philatelist*, the organ of the London Philatelic Society, are calculated to put a different aspect on the much bolstered-up provisionals, and tend to show that after all the coveted treasures are the fruit of speculation.

Naturally, British boys and their elders are desirous of having interesting stamps to show to their friends, and in any ordinary case nothing could exceed the interest attaching to issues of the Mafeking order. As it is, it behoves us to speak plainly, and warn young and old against these exhorbitant relics of war, the value (?) of which is fixed by those who hold the wires of the stamp market at the right end. There must be thousands of Mafeking stamps, both unused and used, somewhere. Large, very large, quantities—according to Mr. Stamford's information—were issued, and every stamp was bought up, prior to the raising of the seige! The state of the besieged was such that single letters could scarcely leave the town. Where, then, could be the use for a total of 61,434 stamps?

The stamp market is necessarily governed by the law of supply and demand, and no fault can be found with stamp collecting while this method of buying and selling legitimate Government issues prevails; but it is no recommendation of philately for the juniors to know, that for selfish and sordid interests, stamp collecting is being relegated to a mere speculator's gamble, the tables of which are controlled by a few who play the game for what it puts into their pockets. The writer speaks from the standpoint of a collector, and also from long experience. He warns young collectors to eschew any desires after these "immense rarities," the estimated values of which are visionary and ephemeral.

An excellent article upon the Mafeking boom appears in "*Stamps*" for November, and those desiring further information are advised to send for the paper to Mr F. L. Heygate, Rushden, R.S.O. Price, 2½

REVIEW.

THE NEW A.B.C. CATALOGUE.

Messrs. Bright & Son have reached a new, the fourth, edition of their well-known "A.B.C. Catalogue." This is the only single volume catalogue published, which lists *all* varieties, including envelopes, wrappers, and postcards. The present edition runs to 850 pages, with over 5,000 excellent illustrations, and includes, in addition to the usual values for unused and used specimens, a wealth of information indispensable to collectors, young and old. The price is but 2s. 6d. nett, and at this figure we can recommend the new "A.B.C." as being all that a collector can need. The marvel is how Messrs. Bright & Son can produce the book at the price. The following quotation from the Preface will be read with interest, and, we trust, duly digested.

We may here state that, while no objection can be raised against the legitimate issue of new stamps, we are of the opinion that unnecessary issues have lately been alarmingly frequent, which entails a continual drain upon the pockets of both Collectors and members of the Trade, while it simply serves to enrich the coffers of impecunious petty Governments and Corporations. This has disgusted many Collectors, and in a large number of instances has caused their withdrawal from an active interest in Philately. We must respectfully point out that this class of "stuff" would not be produced if it did not sell well enough to make the game pay. It is, therefore, entirely in Collectors own hands as to whether the nuisance shall cease. At present it is a great danger to our hobby.

SOME INTERESTING NEW ISSUES.

COREA.—Messrs. Stanley Gibbons, Limited, have sent me a new set of stamps, one value of which I illustrate. There are seven varieties in all, each differing in minor respects. The values are expressed in "re" and "chinn," there being ten re to one chinn, and 100 chinn are equal to 2s. of English money. Colours: 2 re grey, 1 chinn green, 2 chinn pale blue, 3 chinn dull red, 4 chinn carmine, 5 chinn pink, 6 chinn blue.

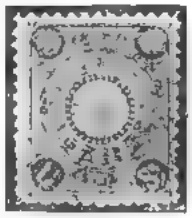
COREA.

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC.—Some time back our Dominican friends were jubilating over the discovery, real or imaginary, of Columbus' bones. Evidently there is an impression that the Republic might be overlooked in our geographies, for they have issued a map stamp, the design of

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC.

which is illustrated. The values are five: ½c. blue, ¼c. pink, 1c. grey, 2c. green, 5c. brown.

GREECE.—The surcharges alluded to last month are multiplying *ad nauseam*. A fresh batch has arrived, some of which are overprinted with the enigmatical letters "A.M.," which is said to designate them as parcels stamps.



JAPAN.

INDIA.—More new colours: 3 pies grey, ½ anna yellow-green.

JAPAN.—Messrs. Stanley Gibbons, Limited, have sent me a new value, which I illustrate: 1½ sen grey.

MOROCCO (German).—Here is another addition to German Colonial issues, the current stamps of the German Empire being surcharged "Marocco," and new value in "centimos." The surcharge is in black on all values. 3pf. brown, 5pf. green, 10pf. carmine, 20pf. blue, 25pf. black and orange on yellow, 30pf. black and red on buff.

MOROCCO.

NEW ZEALAND.—The *Melbourne Argus* announces that the Government of New Zealand has commissioned the President of the Royal Academy, Sir Edward Poynter, to design the new penny stamp which is to inaugurate the adoption of universal penny postage. The design is described as being emblematical of New Zealand diffusing the benefits of cheap postage throughout the world.

NORTHERN NIGERIA.—An illustration of the new stamps is given herewith. These stamps do not, I find, supersede the Niger Coast stamps, but are for use in the northern portions of the late Niger Company's territories.

NORTHERN NIGERIA

ORANGE RIVER COLONY.—The current ½d. green Cape of Good Hope stamp has been overprinted "Orange River Colony" in black.

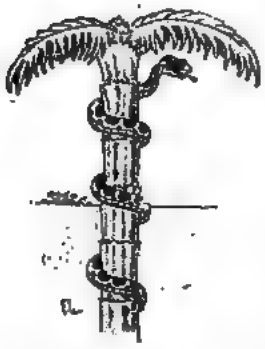
ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

N. Butler.—Thanks for your letter, but I doubt your anticipations of rarity will not be realized this side of one hundred years! The Swiss jubilee labels are postage stamps, I admit, but there was absolutely no need for their issue; they are therefore speculative and unnecessary. **Connie Wilkie** wishes to know of someone who would receive unlimited numbers of common stamps. This is a large order, and Connie does not say whether they are to be given away or for sale. If the former, I can put her into communication with about 50,000 philatelic readers of THE CAPTAIN. If the latter, I fear there are few purchasers, as very common stamps are only worth so much per sack. **C. Medrington** asks the value of a Hong Kong jubilee stamp, unused. It is worth about 2s., and less used. **"Collector."**—I regret that it is not possible for me to value stamps which are imperfectly described to me by letter. **J. A. McSweeny.**—There is no such stamp as an English (you ought to say British) half-penny blue. See reply to "Collector." **T. G. H.** has a stamp which has a water-mark which is indistinct, which he thinks might be soaked in benzine, which he thinks might damage it, which would be disastrous, both to the stamp and himself, in which I quite concur! "T. G. H.," nevertheless, need not fear that the benzine will hurt the specimen. The operation should be quite bewhiching! Pinch, please. **"Jumbo."**—I have no time to sit on the doorstep of 12, Burleigh Street, and wait for letters to come in, nor can I guarantee replies by return of post. **Brisbane Girl.**—Yes; Queensland stamps *are* pretty and interesting, especially the early design. The later issues have been spoilt by frequent tinkering of the dies. The large 2s. 6d., 5s., and 10s. stamps are among the prettiest issued. Glad you like THE CAPTAIN. **"Mafeking."**—You will see elsewhere what I think of the Mafeking stamps. Others think differently, and are willing to pay for them. **F. H. Wilson.**—You cannot do better than write to the Circus Stamp Co., who have just issued their new price list. The prices are very low, especially for South African issues. See advertisement. **T. G. Philpot.**—1, 2s. 6d.; 2, 4d.; 3, 1d.; 4, 1s.; 5, 9d; 6, 5s.

Next month Mr. Gooch's article will be entitled:

"ALL ABOUT GREAT BRITAIN STAMPS."

Don't miss this article. Plate numbers, watermarks, etc., will be fully described



THE false dawn had scarcely flushed the sky when a voice called me: "Sahib, awake! We must start early, for the day will soon grow hot, and the jungle is far off."

I didn't like to leave my bed, which was placed on the lawn behind the bungalow, for the morning hours brought the refreshing sleep that was denied me during the hot night. But a day with Jungly the Bird-catcher was a treat not to be missed, and it had taken no small bribe to induce this solitude-loving individual to let me accompany him on his rambles in the jungle.

The creature before me was a ragged, unwashed, low-caste Hindoo, but he had the charm of living a life as free as the birds of the air. So free, indeed, was he from the restraints of civilisation, its manners and customs, that he was known in the bazaars as "Jungly," *i.e.*, the Wild Man.

In his hand he held a number of bamboos, tied together much in the fashion of the chimney-sweep's bundle. The different pieces fitted together making one long bamboo—this was his lime-rod, with which he caught his birds. At his side hung a large canvas bag, in which he generally stowed away his loot, and in which you might find anything from a young mongoose to a crocodile's egg.

We were soon upon our way.

After the false dawn the sky had grown dark again. Soon, however, the first sunbeams stretched like the rays of a search-light from horizon to zenith, and the sky quickly filled with birds, mostly the green parrot, which sets out early to its favourite feeding grounds, fifty or sixty miles away. They fly in large flocks, their green plumage looking like gems flashing across the rose-pink sky.

Our way to the jungle lay beside the course of a river, with long stretches of sand on either bank. Jungly's sharp eyes soon detected some moving objects ahead, and, telling me to follow his example, he got down on his hands and knees, and crawled forward noiselessly, hiding in the thick furze bushes that lined the sandy track. At last we came to a spot whence we could see a large number of river turtles, or tortoise, busy digging pits in the sand; others were shovelling sand into similar pits where they had already laid their eggs. Jungly told me he had found as many as 300 eggs in one pit. Fortunately, the turtle does not have to provide food for her large family, else she would have a tremendous task on her hands.

We carefully avoided disturbing them, and after Jungly had made a few marks for private reference on some of the furze bushes, we continued on our way. We were soon in the thick of the jungle, and the air was full of the song of birds. Jungly understood their language like one of themselves. I had often heard this said of the bird-catchers, and determined to question him.

"What a noise those babblers are making in that mimosa tree!" I remarked.

"Yes; they have just killed a dhamin snake that tried to get at their eggs," he replied, hardly looking in the direction of the tree.

The simple, matter-of-fact way in which he said this so surprised me that I turned to go towards the tree to see whether he was right.

"Take care," he added. "The snake is not yet quite dead."

Now from where we stood the intervening bushes were so thick that it was impossible to see anything at the foot of the tree, so this piece of information astonished me more than ever. Having forced myself through the bushes that grew between, I came to the foot of the tree, and there lay a large dhamin, or whip snake, almost 6ft. long, in the throes of death, its head and body being torn and punctured by the sharp bills of the babblers.

"However could you know all that, Jungly?" I asked, when I got back to where I left him.

"It is very simple, sahib," said he; "also I can tell you the snake you found was nearly 6ft. long."

"Tell me how it was possible to understand that from the birds' talk," I said.

"This way, sahib. The babblers, or seven sisters, have a quick, loud cry when they see a snake, quite different from their other alarm cries; at least, I can tell the difference. Just now, when you noticed the hubbub, most of it was just the chatter of excitement that follows some danger they have escaped. Some gave a cluck of satisfaction, that meant they were now quite safe, and many were cleaning their bills against the bark, which proved they had been using them. Every now and then some would give the alarm cry of 'snake'; that is because the snake was not quite dead, but still writhing. At another season the babblers would have only flown about and screamed if they had seen a snake; but you see there are several nests in the tree, and the snake knew it was the time for eggs; so it must have a fight to the finish."

THE LIMED ROD WAS NOW A FEW FEET FROM THE BIRDS.

"But how could you tell the snake was about 6ft. long, and a dhamin?"

"Because, sahib, if you will look at the tree you may see by the trunk, which the woodcutters have deprived of its bark, that no snake could climb it, on account of its smoothness. Therefore, it got up by the branches where they hang very low; and as the lowest branch is about 5ft. from the ground, therefore it must have been only a 6ft. dhamin snake that could do it. No other snake that sucks eggs would be long enough."

"But how do you know it ever climbed the tree?" I replied, and I thought I had fixed him.

"Because the birds would never attack it on the ground; in the branches it cannot turn so quickly and defend itself, therefore it was in the tree when it got its skull pecked through!"

"Why should you think the skull was pecked through? You did not see it," I persisted.

"What other wound would kill a snake?" answered Jungly, quite simply.

I was profoundly impressed by the bird catcher's jungle knowledge, even more when I found that what appeared to be some supernatural power was only the outcome of patient observation.

Many were the wonderful things he told me that morning which would surprise you beyond measure had I the space to relate them. But one little bit of conversation I may mention before I go further.

"It will rain the day after to morrow," he observed, casually.

"Why do you say so?" I asked.

"The frogs are talking," he replied, shortly.

"Did they mention the date?" I asked, sarcastically.

"The old ones feel the coming rain two days off," he explained. "The young ones can only

tell the day before it rains. Now it is only the old ones that are rejoicing. The young are silent."

One of the prettiest sights that morning was a colony of green parrots hollowing out the boughs of some dead mango trees into numberless little caves and hollows, in which they would shortly bring up their quaint little families. Jungly, after a mental calculation, informed me there would be at least 500 young parrots in those nests in a couple of months' time, and I think his face quite brightened as he thought of the many rupees to be gleaned from the bazaars, where the simple Hindoo loves to have a parrot calling on the name of his favourite god all day long.

In the midst of the jungle we came across a grove of samul cotton trees. At this season of the year the tree had no leaves, but was covered with its magnificent crimson flowers; which, owing to the shape of the branches, made the trees look like gigantic candelabra aflame against the blue sky. The flowers contained a sweet honey, which brought hundreds of birds to it. At present there was a great flock of rose-breasted starlings, with their beautiful pink and black plumage, busy feasting on the banquet before them.

A WHITE, MILKY FLUID TRICKLED OUT OF THE CUTS.

Jungly, leaving me in the gloomy shadow of a mango tree, stole softly forward until he was under one of the trees where dozens of starlings were squabbling and fighting over their meal. Then, taking from his bag a bottle made from a joint of bamboo which contained his bird-lime, he covered a long thin piece of bamboo with it, and, fitting it to a piece somewhat thicker, he slowly raised it to the branches overhead, fitting piece after piece to it, till it grew about twice as long as the biggest fishing-rod you have ever seen.

The limed rod was now a few feet from the birds, but it moved as slowly as a shadow and attracted no attention. Now it was only a foot away from a fine specimen of the rose starling, which was too busy with its meal to notice the limed rod. Suddenly the rod darted forward among the tail and wing feathers of the bird, and it was a prisoner. Its cry of alarm was hardly heard amongst all the noisy screaming and fighting that was going on. The more it struggled to free itself the more involved it became, and it was soon helplessly descending to the ground on the end of the lime-rod. The bird-catcher gave me the starling to hold, and commenced to repeat his performance. The slight alarm created by the capture soon subsided, and he was again successful; for, though at other times the birds would have been scared away, the honey from the samul flower partially intoxicates them, and they can hardly be driven from the tree while the flower lasts, which is only a few days.

Jungly caught a dozen of the birds, and could have caught more, only the problem seemed to be how he was going to take them away without a cage of any kind, but he soon overcame that difficulty. Taking some rags from his bag he tore them into strips, and tied one over the head of each bird, blind-folding it. Then he made them all perch on a bamboo, which he put upon his shoulder, and the birds, being in darkness, sat tight and never attempted to fly, although they could not have made much use of their wings in their sticky condition.

THE GREAT BIRD FIGHTING TO GET FREE.

Jungly considered that he had done a good day's work, and as it was now noon and very hot, we turned our faces homeward.

The hush of noon had fallen upon the jungle, the noise of bird, beast, and insect had ceased for a space; for it was time for the noonday *siesta*. Suddenly we were startled by a shrill voice calling out from the tree overhead, "*Ram sat hai*" (God alone is pure). We looked up into the foliage, but there was nothing visible. Again came the pious Hindoo cry.

"I should know that voice," said Jungly; "I believe it is the Bahadur Sahib's parrot which he brought from the hills. I wonder how it got loose."

"Is that the parrot he paid a hundred rupees for because it can recite verses from the Shostras?" I asked.

"The same," answered Jungly; "and he values it very highly."

"Then why not catch it?" I added. "You could be sure of the Bahadur Sahib giving you twenty rupees for it, at least."

"I am afraid it will be a very difficult task," said he, "for it is a very heavy bird."

At that moment the parrot, as if it had been listening to us discussing its capture, gave a loud derisive laugh and flew off to a tree some distance away. I then saw why Jungly was doubtful about catching it, for the green parrot from the hills can attain the size of a macaw, and this is a very large bird indeed.

"The weight of that bird would snap the top joint of my rod," he said, looking at the distant parrot, which was just visible on the top of a mango tree.

"Why not use a thicker joint," I suggested.

"Because it would be seen so easily as it moved amongst the foliage," he replied.

After a few minutes' profound reflection, however, he seemed to make up his mind to attempt the capture of the bird.

Slitting up a thick piece of bamboo, he made another top joint about half-an-inch thick, which he covered with the *lassa* or lime; then, bidding me stay where I was, he began to creep towards the tree in which the parrot was sitting, taking advantage of all the cover he could on the way. But the bird was wary in the extreme, and before he could arrive at the tree it flew off with its mocking laugh towards another and more distant tree. Then Jungly changed his tactics, and instead of going after the bird he crouched down in the long grass and made his way to a small plum tree at right angles to the direction the bird had flown in.

Having concealed himself under the small plum tree, Jungly began to imitate the call of the female parrot, from its cry of pleasure to the soft caressing tones in which it called its mate.

The parrot put its head on one side and

listened attentively, as if criticising the imitative powers of Jungly. Then it responded with two or three calls, and flew in circles round the tree where Jungly was hiding. But evidently it suspected something, and feared it might lose its hard-gained liberty, for it eventually settled on a small tree some distance off, and the most persuasive and dulcet tones of Jungly's imaginary parrot were lost on it, for though it listened intently, it was not to be drawn to the plum tree under which Jungly was concealed. An hour went by, and I was tired of this fruitless chase, and hoped Jungly would give up the idea of catching the parrot.

But the bird-catcher was a man of great resources, as I was to find out. For a few minutes the imaginary parrot ceased to cry; then suddenly I heard the harsh, jarring scream of a mynah bird in a bad temper, evidently proceeding from the tree where Jungly was hiding. I had crept quite close to the scene of operations, and I was astonished to see the big green parrot puff up its feathers till it looked twice its size, and a very formidable and angry bird. Then the voice of the mynah screamed out something in a tone that was suggestive of abuse and sarcasm and ended with a challenge to mortal combat. Before its voice had died away the parrot swooped down on the plum tree, with feathers erect, and, giving utterance to a murderous snarling noise, set to burrowing into the foliage of the tree in search of the mynah. There was silence for a few minutes, then there was a despairing cry from the Bahadur Sahib's parrot, and I knew Jungly's artifices had succeeded. Soon he emerged from concealment, with the great bird fighting to get free, flapping and screaming, and trying to get some part of Jungly between its strong mandibles. But he knew how to quiet his captive, and a small pill of opium dropped into its open mouth soon made it as tame and sleepy as a house cat.

Jungly was elated at his capture, and the thought of the reward he would probably get for his trouble.

HALF-FLEDGED "QUEEN" PARROTS.

"I was very nearly giving up," he said, "when I found the old bachelor was not to be decoyed by love. Then I remembered the mynah bird the Bahadur Sahib had, between which and the parrot there was always a deadly feud. The parrot being chained to a perch was at a disadvantage, for the mynah would drop on him when he was asleep, drag a few feathers out of his back, and be off before the enraged parrot could catch him.

"You see I was not wrong in thinking that hate may be stronger than love with the morose old parrot," he added. "As he was too cautious to let me come within reach of him I had to be

artful enough to bring him home, and therefore imitated the mynah."

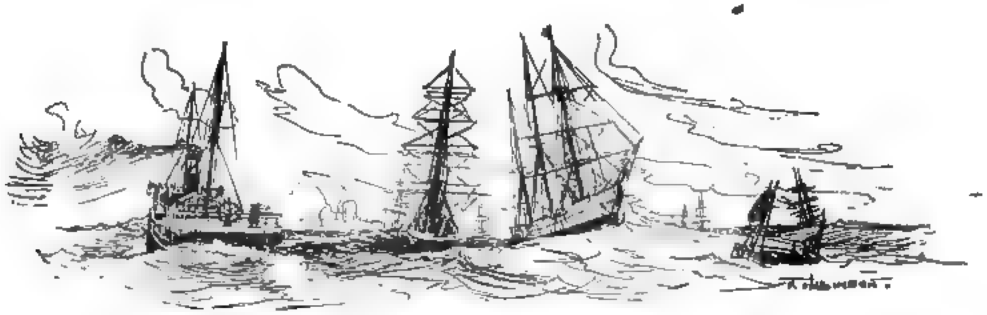
I have put Jungly's rough homely words into language which is more understandable to my readers; but it must not give them the impression that he was anything but a poor illiterate bird-catcher, however shrewd and keen the powers of observation which he possessed.

On our way we came across a very fine peepul tree, and Jungly said he wanted to make some *lassa*, or bird-lime, as his stock was running out. He accordingly took a small hatchet from his bag, and began to hack the trunk in several places. Immediately, a white milky fluid trickled out of the cuts; this he gathered in a cup, the fluid soon thickening through the action of the air. He then mixed some oil with it, and worked it into a very stringy state with a piece of stick, until it became tenacious enough to stick his forefinger and thumb together so securely that he could hardly get them apart. This lime is much stronger than that used in this country, and large parrots, and even strong hawks become powerless in its grip.

MAKING LASSA.

Besides the lime-rod Jungly has other ways of trapping birds. He can float down amongst a flock of ducks on the river, with his head concealed in an earthen vessel, and noose the whole flock by the legs before they are aware of it. Sometimes he will take a large net and snare a field full of quail, which bring him in a good deal of money, although quail are very cheap in India; but his most lucrative job is when you see him going round with two enormous cages, slung from a pole, containing half-fledged "queen" parrots, which are readily bought both by Europeans and natives. Hawks and falcons also find a ready sale and fetch the biggest prices, for the native gentlemen are often fond of hawking.

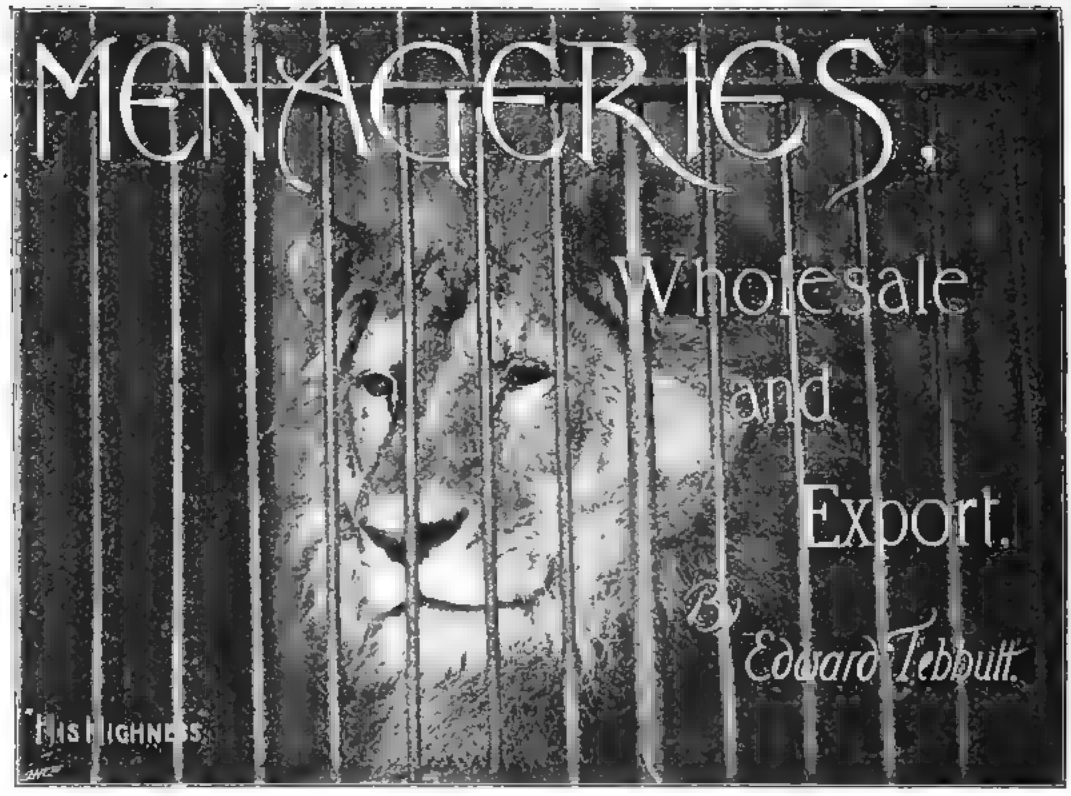
Jungly leads an ideal life, and is as happy in the jungles as the monkey-folk themselves. Since that day's excursion we have often gone out together, and the strange adventures he has told me of, and the instances of his marvellous manner of understanding bird and beast language which I have witnessed, would fill a book; and some day, when I have the time to spare, I shall tell you more of Jungly the Bird-catcher.



A HEAVY SWELL IN YARMOUTH ROADS.

Menageries, Wholesale and Export.

By Edward Tebbutt.



"MR. SHOWMAN," piped the youth to the magnificent proprietor of the travelling circus, "where do you get a new lion from when one of 'em happens to die?"

"Vy, my little dook," replied the facetious gentleman, "ve goes down to Peckham Rye and crouches under a rock, and ven ve sees a lion astrollin' along, ve sprinkles 'is tail vith salt and vhistles 'Rool Britannia,' and, bless yer little 'eart, 'e trots behind us like a puppy dawg. Straight, 'e do!"

And in the mind of the callow youth there doubtless arose a vision of a day in the near future when he, too, should salt lions' tails, or even rise to the unparalleled eminence of inserting his head in their gaping jaws, to the accompaniment of the cheers of applauding thousands. We most of us, I fancy, have experienced that wild longing at least once during our juvenile career; the desire seems to wear off in time, however, and we rest content to remain a mere spectator.

I scarcely imagine that the salted tail theory will hold water as far as readers of THE CAPTAIN are concerned; but, lest any of them should be placed in such a position that they require a white elephant or a laughing hyena at a moment's notice, it is only right they should know to whom to apply for the immediate gratification of their desire. The man, then, who deals in menageries, either in bulk or piecemeal, so to speak, is Mr. William Cross, and his wild beast emporium is located at Liverpool. At Cross's establishment, you can procure anything from a dromedary to a grass-snake, or from a jaguar to an Egyptian mummy—delivered, carriage paid, by return.

Mr. Cross's menagerie, where he maintains his somewhat peculiar stock, is the most interesting place of its kind that I have ever visited. It is more or less a public menagerie; but if you call in on Monday and become specially interested in, say, a pair of Red River hogs, it is no use your returning on the following Thursday with the idea of having another look at them. For the odds are that by this time they will be well on their way to Calcutta or Klondyke, and their cage will be occupied by an individual of gorilla persuasion. Indeed, the great charm of the place lies in its infinite variety; for instance,

on the first occasion of my visit I beheld something like a couple of hundred monkeys, and a week later only three were in evidence. The famine, however, was merely a question of hours, for Mr. Cross was expecting a fresh stock of 500 by the next incoming steamer—a shipload of monkeys with a vengeance, eh?

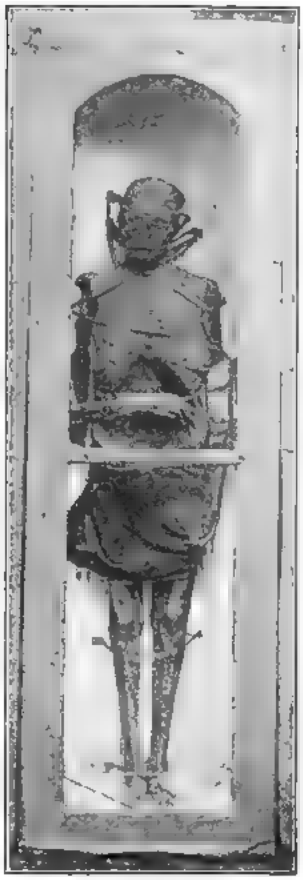
"William Cross, Licensed to deal in Game"—such is the somewhat humorous sign displayed over his doorway by the largest importer of wild animals in the world. I passed beneath it into a small lobby stacked with curios and rarities innumerable, and the first atrocity that struck my eye was a mummy in a glass case—a lady mummy who, a few thousand years ago, had been an Egyptian queen with an unpronounceable name. Have you ever seen a mummy? If not, don't worry about it; you wouldn't be edified. The royal personage in question looked more like a rag doll that had seen better days and had been used to mop up a London pavement after a day's sleet. I suppose it is rather impolite to refer to a lady in such uncomplimentary language, especially a lady old enough to be my great grandmother once or even twice removed; but such was my impression, and there you have it. Squatting opposite to the mummy were a couple of porcelain Burmese gods, and from their expression of countenance I gather that it is a very fine thing indeed to be a Burmese god. They were smiling broad smiles of placid imbecility in a superior fashion that made me long to take them out in the Liverpool slums and lose them; indeed, I should have suggested the idea, only Mr. Cross incidentally remarked that they were worth several hundred pounds each, when I felt more inclined to overlook their shortcomings in the way of facial distortion.

MR. WILLIAM CROSS.
"Licensed to deal in game."
From a photograph.

Mr. W. Simpson Cross, who since the death of his father, the late Mr. William Cross, has succeeded to the business, was good enough to conduct me round the place and to answer the string of questions that I put to him. The menagerie, which is obviously built for practical rather than for show purposes, is of very considerable size, and during the past forty years has contained practically every species of wild animal extant. The beasts are received from almost every country—civilized or uncivilized—under the sun, where Mr. Cross has agents who buy up specimens from hunters and trappers, and ship them here to Liverpool. Sailors, too, form a continuous source of supply, and it is very rarely indeed that a vessel reaches Liverpool from any distant oversea port without containing live stock for this well-known English naturalist. Concerning the trapping of wild beasts, by the way, Mr. Cross tells rather a funny yarn. A couple of English sailors, whose ship was anchored at a West African port, strolled into the mainland with an eye to collecting specimens. They reached a cave which presented rather a likely appearance, and William—commonly called "Bill"—crawled inside to investigate, his companion keeping watch at the entrance It so happened that the cave formed the coast residence of a particularly bloodthirsty lion, who put in an unwelcome appearance just as Bill was well inside. The sentinel, who saw him coming, promptly skipped behind a boulder, and as the lion wriggled through the doorway, he seized it by the tail and, planting his feet against the rocks, held on for grim life. "Hi, Jack," shouted the cave explorer, "what's blocking up the light?" "You wait a bit," replied the perspiring Jack. "You'll find out what's blocking up the light as soon as the tail breaks!"

The majority of animals that are shipped to the Cross emporium are caught as cubs. Wounded animals are, of course, comparatively useless; so that, to obtain saleable, full-grown specimens, the hunters and trappers require to have recourse to strategy. For the capture of

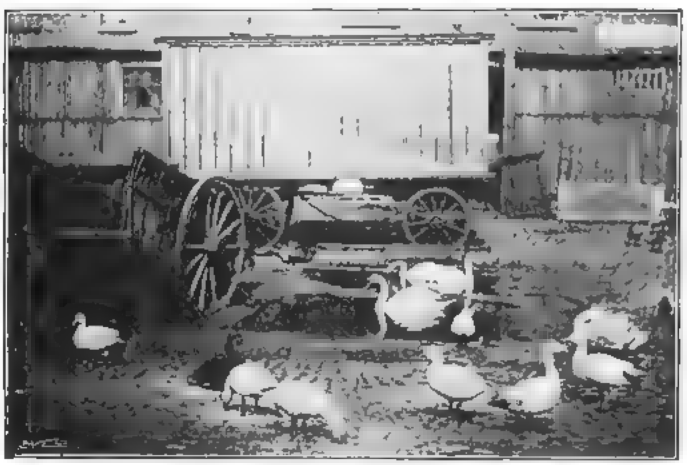
lions, tigers, and beasts of a like breed, deep pits are dug, are covered with sticks and straw, and finally baited. In the course of his wanderings, the king of the forest comes across the trap, and, investigating the bait, is promptly floored. A thin, strong net is flung loosely over the top, within range of the frantic bounds of the captive, and as he springs upwards, he becomes enfolded in the insidious meshes, is lifted bodily from the pit in a helpless condition, and carried by natives to Mr. Cross's nearest agent, where he is promptly deposited in a travelling cage and shipped to Liverpool. Delicate specimens, such as springbok, deer, and species of a similar nature, are even more difficult to obtain, for they have to be stalked, and driven into an enclosed paddock—an operation which nine times out of ten is unsuccessful in its results. A junior member of the firm—Mr. J. Conrad Cross—has lately been occupied in touring the world, supervising the agents, and buying up all available live stock. He is supposed to have penetrated further north in China than any white man of his generation.



RARE "GAME."
Being the mummy of an Egyptian queen.

To the travelling showman Mr. Cross is more or less indispensable—and it may interest you to know that that species of peripatetic entertainer is as numerous in England to-day as ever he was. For him Mr. Cross will construct a caravan, or a series of caravans, and will stock them with a motley collection of wild animals that most appeal to the sight-seeing public. As the showman prospers, Mr. Cross assists him in the increasing of his attractions; should he desire a waltzing elephant, or a *prima-donna* ostrich, the trainers at the Cross emporium turn them out with efficiency and despatch. Or, on the other hand, should he prefer a constant change of programme, he can hire a waltzing bear for a week or two, and as soon as its novelty has worn off, can exchange it for a boxing dromedary or a whistling alligator. Anything to maintain the attractiveness of his show is procurable from Mr. Cross—even a full-blooded negro to wear a laced coat and minister to the requirements of the elephant, or a Burmese youth to wring unwilling music from the big drum by the side of the pay-office.

Among the many exciting events which have occurred in connection with this peculiar business, the most noteworthy, perhaps, and at the same time the least humorous, was the burning down of the menagerie, which happened about three years ago, and resulted in the destruction of close upon seventy animals of various breeds. The fire originated in the lion-house, and rapidly spread to the adjoining premises, carrying inevitable decimation in its wake. The roaring of frenzied lions, the frantic trumpeting of elephants, lent a ghastly significance to the agony and terror reigning within, and it was some little time before the firemen ventured inside the place with their hose. Fortunately, however, the cages remained secure, and it is reasonable to assume that the animals were suffocated by the dense volumes of smoke, even before



A CORNER OF THE SWAN AND DUCK YARD.

MDLLE. VALDA: THE "ONLY LADY LION TAMER," DURING HER EXHIBITION WITH CROSS'S FOREST-BRED LIONS.

they were touched by the flames. The sole survivors were a baby elephant, which had the sense to lie quiet in a corner, and a young kangaroo, whose cage was outside the limits of the fire. For the rest, a few hyenas were just barely alive, but so maddened with pain that it was found necessary to despatch them immediately.

Then there was the case of the elephant that ran amuck. This gentleman was a particularly restless member of his species, and during his railway travelling was addicted to such little pleasantries as walking through the walls of his van, or surveying the scenery from impromptu holes in the roof. When he arrived in Liverpool he was roped behind a heavy dray and conducted towards Cross's menagerie in great style. *En route*, however, he took exception to the colour of a passing 'bus, and, without consulting the dray or the dray-horse, made an heroic charge across the road. The dray followed sideways, as a matter of course, and had not the keeper severed the ropes, something tragic would doubtless have happened. As it was, the elephant's wild career was eventually brought to a conclusion, and he was successfully piloted to the menagerie. Upon arrival here, he found something in the atmosphere which did not altogether agree with his constitution, so decided to sever his brief connection with Mr. Cross. He was penned in a yard, having stout iron gates, which were already closed and barred. He didn't trouble about lifting the catch, as you or I would have done, but simply strolled through the iron without a sneeze, leaving it snapped and mangled behind him. Then

AMALAMAZOO: THE AFRICAN PIGMY DWARF.
The most wonderful being in existence.

THIS IS A VERY SCARCE SPECIMEN OF THE WATER BUFFALO.

to expire; the sagacious animal, however, did nothing of the kind, but smiled gently and continued its intermittent slumbering. Then a syringe was obtained and more prussic acid was squirted in his mouth. He evidently disliked the flavour for he promptly spat it out again, but a second injection shot straight down his throat and refused to be dislodged. In a couple of hours or so, he showed signs of uneasiness, and at length became distinctly agitated. He swayed dizzily from side to side, and finally ended his career of dissipation by expiring upon the grass. And should this paragraph meet the

he made a rush for the country, only pausing by the way to smash a few windows and to otherwise emphasize the high-class nature of his manners by charging old ladies and donkey-carts, and casual live-stock in the way of dogs and poultry. Needless to observe, the old ladies, etc., got out of his way with celerity, and didn't wait to be assisted, so to speak.

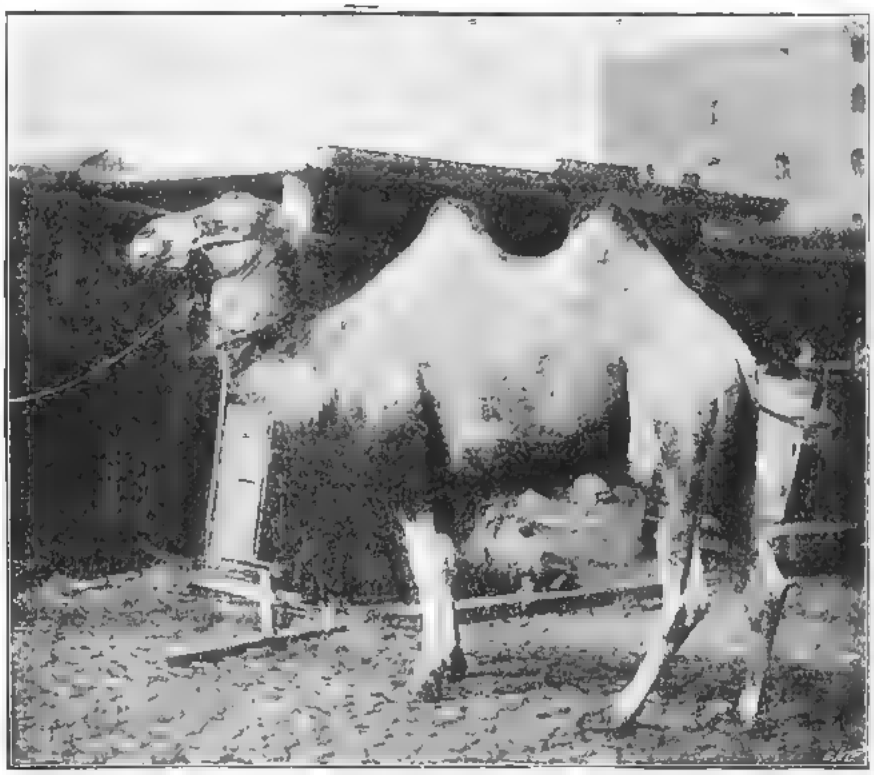
By and by he reached the city suburbs, and for a day and a night had a high old time on his own; then he was caught napping by a farm labourer who promptly roped his fore feet to a couple of adjacent trees. So far, the elephant had done all the laughing; but from this point onwards Mr. Cross bossed the show, and by way of retaliation ordered prussic acid. So a carrot, with its centre scraped out, was filled with a sufficient dose of that succulent poison to dispose of a hundred human beings, this *bonne bouche* being proffered to the runaway, who swallowed it with gusto. The onlookers stood around in the rain and patiently waited for the elephant

A HARMLESS ANTELOPE: A GREAT RARITY.

eye of any self-willed elephant of immature years, I hope the lesson it conveys will be duly taken to heart.

The packing and forwarding department of Mr. Cross's wild beast factory presents decidedly novel features in the way of commercial despatch. Light goods, such as lions and bears and hyenas, are forwarded to their destination in heavy travelling cages, the latter being of sufficient size to afford comfort to their occupants, but allowing little superfluous room for casual gymnastic performances. The cages are, of course, very solidly built, having bars at one end only, whilst during street cartage, even this aperture is screened by a sliding trap. So, except for sundry mysterious growls and rumblings which occasionally emanate, the cases might just as presumably be filled with boots or with brass watches from Germany; greater care, however, has to be exercised in keeping the right side up, because lions don't like to take up a permanent position on their backs during a sea trip, and when lions don't like anything, they usually let you know.

Bulky packages, in the way of elephants and camels, are despatched loose, as it were, under the charge of a menagerie attendant; indeed, keepers usually accompany the more valuable animals of every class, especially if their destination happens to be the far east or the extreme west, or other distant quarters of the globe.



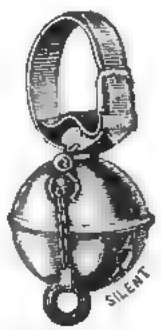
DESTINED FOR THE ZOOLOGICAL GARDENS.

THE CYCLING CORNER

By HAIDON PERRY.

BICYCLE BELLS.

THE bell is a very important adjunct to the cycle, and especially so since it has become a practically silent carriage. I have known blind men who could hear a bicycle, however slowly it might be creeping upon them, but the average person hears nothing at all, unless the machine is "speaking" in some part or other of its mechanism, and that, of course, is a sure sign that something is out of order and requires immediate attention. From the very first, when bicycles did, indeed, make what we should now consider a great deal of noise, they were still rather quiet as compared with other road vehicles, and in very early times a bell of some sort was usually carried. The most ridiculous type employed was the old house bell, with its crude clock-spring arrangement—a form of bell which, in these days of electricity, is becoming less and less seen even in our homes. When fixed to a boneshaker it was kept at work by the vibration set up between the iron tyre and the road, and added yet another to the many annoyances and discomforts endured by the early pioneers.



THE "STOP" BELL.

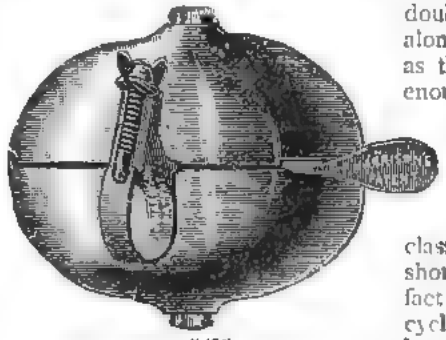
In those days, and, indeed, for long afterwards, the English law took no account of bicycles. There were plenty of things which riders might not do, but their legal status was unknown, and a great many difficulties and hardships arose in consequence. One of the first things that happened was that all the local authorities in the country—and there were many hundreds of them—began to legislate on their own account. There was no doubt need for some regulation of the new traffic, but anything more inconsistent than piecemeal legislation for riders of so cosmopolitan a vehicle as the bicycle, destined as it was to roam all over the land, could hardly be imagined. Most cyclists who were keen—and we were all keen in the old days—took the trouble to learn their own local by-laws. We knew whether we might ride on the footpaths or not in our own districts, and possibly we knew how matters stood in one or two adjoining localities. But obviously nobody could possibly be acquainted with all the varying rules laid down by parish wiseacres scattered from one end of the kingdom to the other.

I remember once being on a tour from the Midlands to the west of England. If I could only show you a picture of the mount this journey was undertaken upon you would laugh hugely. But I was very proud of it at that period. I carried with me both a bell and a whistle, because I knew that while some local authorities required the use of the one, there were also some who would have none of it, but insisted upon the tourist employing the other. Well, when I reached the beautiful old city of Bath, I was just pedalling quietly through a rather well-frequented thoroughfare with my whistle between my lips, and ringing my bell at short intervals, when I was accosted by a policeman, who called out: "That bell must be continuous, sir," and he demanded that I should alight. This I did. I drew his attention to the fact that I was riding slowly, ringing the bell as often as seemed necessary, which I had to do if only for my own sake, and I offered, if he would allow me to proceed, to promise to ring the bell continuously as long as I was within the confines of Bath. But no, the constable was obdurate. The bell

must be one of those "that goes on ringing by itself!"

What he meant was a sort of big cat-bell then much in vogue. It was kept jingling by the vibration of the frame-work and handle-bars. It was only by much soft speech, and the final parting with a shilling of my pocket money—a sum not to be trifled with in those days—that I regained my liberty, but the dubious policeman went with me as far as the city boundary to make sure that I kept my word and made that distance on foot.

On the next opportunity I laid in stock the best continuous bell at that time obtainable. It was called the "Facile," and possessed the advantage of convertibility into a silent bell, or back again into a speaking one, at any moment. This was done by pulling the loose tongue or clapper into a ring just the proper size to confine it, afterwards liberating it when desired by a mere push of the knuckle. There is at least one old firm of cycle accessory makers, Messrs. J. Harrison & Sons, of Birmingham, who still make a device of this description. They call it the "Stop" bell. I was much amused to see a contrivance of the same kind shown at the last cycle show in Paris by an inventor who thought it a novelty. He was twenty years or thereabouts behind his English competitors. Nowadays there is little call for such a bell. Its principal advantages were that it provided you with the means of keeping the law in localities where continuous ringing was required, yet left you free to jog along without its annoyance when you were travelling through other places.

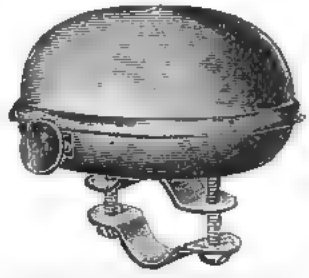


THE LARGE "48" BELL.

THE SMALL "48" BELL.

Happily, all doubt as to what particular law, or set of laws, the tourist is subject to has long since disappeared. In 1888, an Act of Parliament was passed which abolished all these confusing by-laws, and forbade any others being made. At the same time it laid down certain very sensible rules of its own, that should thenceforward apply to cycles and cycle riders. It declared a cycle to be a carriage for all purposes of legal action. It also set forth two regulations, one of which has a direct bearing upon the subject of bells. Without repeating the roundabout lawyers' phrases, I may say that it requires every cyclist who overtakes any cart or carriage, or any animal drawing or carrying anything, or a pedestrian, or another cyclist, before doing so to give "audible and sufficient warning." He must do this by sounding a bell, whistle, "or otherwise." This leaves some doubt as to whether the voice alone is sufficient. So long as the warning is really loud enough for an ordinary person to hear it, and if it is also given soon enough, it seems reasonable that a shout is a proper warning. But it is "no class" to go along the road shouting, and, apart from the fact that magistrates often fine cyclists for relying on their lungs alone, I should dissuade my readers from the practice.

The law clearly recognises either a bell or a whistle, and of the two the former is on many grounds the better. It is by far the best known kind of warning of the approach of a bicycle, which is one good reason for using it. Then, too, unlike the whistle, it still leaves the voice free for a shout should that become necessary. There have been many kinds of warning instruments invented, and some of them have had the run of fashion for awhile. Rattles, air pistols, the hideous "cyclorn," now by general consent given up to the motor-car, and the "deviline," with its vulgar siren shriek—all these have practically ceased their connection with cycling. The whistle still remains, but I should like to see it follow the others. A good bell properly used will answer all requirements, and that there is abundance of choice among the wares of the really good makers we shall presently see. Bells can be had in a considerable variety of forms and sizes, made upon several different principles, and at prices ranging from a shilling up to half a sovereign or more.

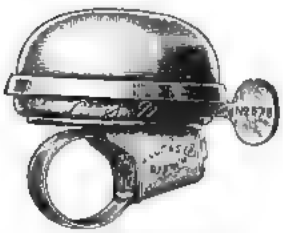


NEW DEPARTURE "ELECTRIC" BELL.

The firm already mentioned have a fine assortment to suit all tastes and all purses. Their "Demon" and "Don" bells are large and small varieties made on similar principles. A large bell generally gives a louder as well as a deeper note than a small one—a point to be observed when you are buying. Bells of the "48" type give two notes, hammers hitting both the upper and the lower dome when the lever is moved, and the domes being purposely made of different sizes. Then Messrs. Brown Bros., of Great Eastern Street, E.C., have a number of knacky bells from America, which they market together with other useful accessories from the same source. The "New Departure" bell is one of theirs. The form of it which is sometimes called the "Electric" is not, of course, worked by electricity. It is actuated by clockwork, which you wind up by turning the dome round a few times before starting out. A mere touch liberates this clockwork for a moment whenever you want to give an alarm. You can have "New Departures" with all kinds of fancy designs upon them if you are of opinion that these look better than the simple polished dome. Then you can invest in a tyre bell, which means one that sounds only when it touches the tyre in motion. An advantage of this class of bell is that the faster you are going the more noise it makes.

A GERMAN TYRE BELL.

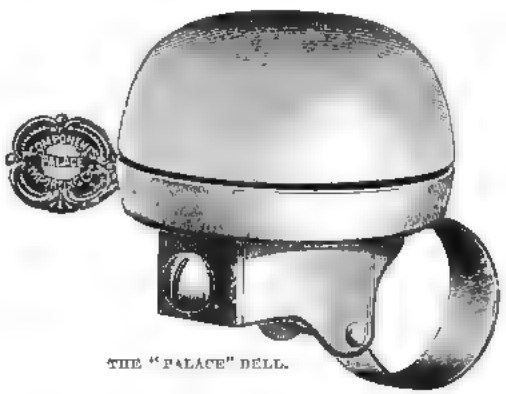
There are other bells on the market that have been made abroad, notably bells from Germany. But English makers nevertheless maintain a high place for the excellence of their productions. There is the old firm of Joseph Lucas, Ltd., of Birmingham. My favourite bell at the present moment is one of their "Challis" bells, with a 3in. dome. You can ring it very loudly if you want to, or very softly, while by holding the lever at a sort of half cock you make the bell continuous for as long as you like. I generally give it a caressing little tinkle at first, and then, if I find that, through deafness or stupidity, that is not sufficient, I sound a louder stroke. There is a great deal in knowing how to use a bell properly, and some day I may have more to say upon that point. For the present I would say that it is important, having once selected a bell, to attach it so that it will be out of the way when the machine is at rest leaning anywhere, and yet quite handy for the finger to be used in working it. Then, too, it should be very firmly screwed on, and once in place it should be regarded as part of the bicycle, and should be carefully cleaned and looked after as if it were. A good bell is worth all the care that a fellow commonly bestows upon the things he values.



LUCAS' "BABY KING."

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

"Invicta" (St. Helens).—The noise you describe probably comes from the saddle springs. Take your oil-can and just touch every point at which one coil makes contact with another. **Jack and Harry F.** (Yarmouth).—The Mohawk tandem is all right. The firm were one of the first to turn out a machine of the kind that was free from "whip," and they have kept up the quality of their work. **"Little Miss"** (Antibes, Alpes Maritimes).—(1) Yes, there is a quite practicable road all the way to Genoa. Much of it was made by Napoleon for military purposes, and it is to-day splendid in parts. (2) Palmer "O" tyres. **"Jack"**

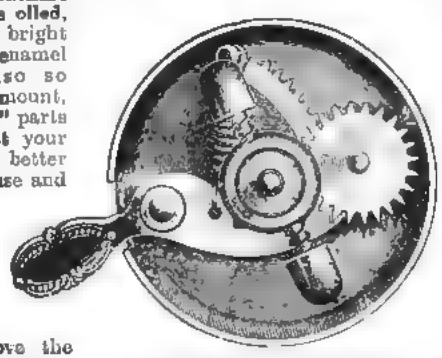


THE "PALACE" BELL.

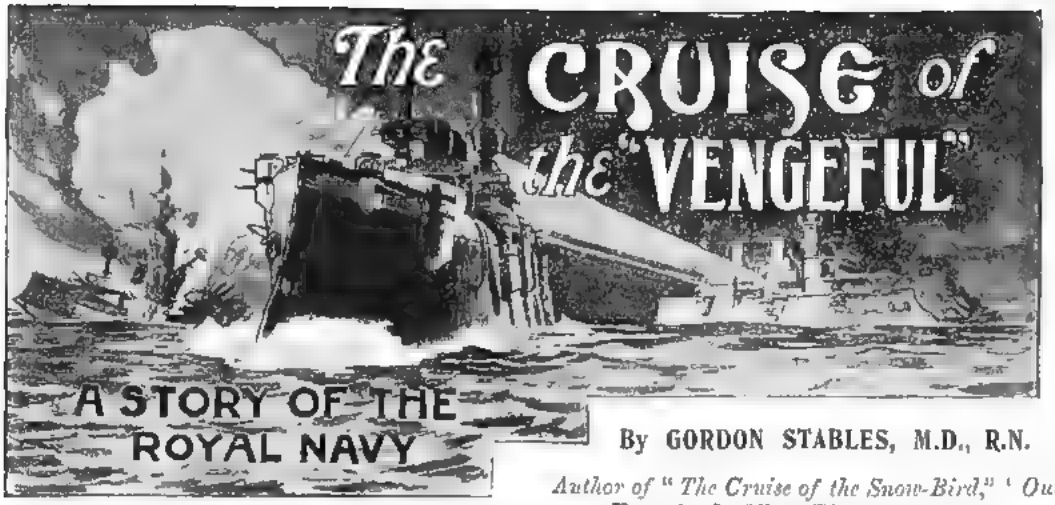
and "Jill" (Kensington).—It is better for the lady to have the rear seat of a tandem; better in every way, except for the smart appearance of the turnout when the other arrangement is adopted. The Raleigh design is the best I have ever seen for the lady to ride behind. **"Jan Ridd"** (Blundells).—The Swift and the Royal Enfield are both in the very first flight. **F. F. H.**—You must give your full name as well as your address. Even if you had done so, are there not many of your questions that you could

answer yourself with very little trouble? I will answer your ninth by saying that the Bradbury is made of sound stuff, and is to be recommended. **L. S.** (Trinity College, Cambridge).—(1) It never does so. (2) Good ones are to be had from Messrs. Joseph Lucas, Ltd., of Birmingham. (3) No. **W. H.** (Fulham). — No. "**Rough-Rider**" (Rossall). — Yes, you need not hesitate; but don't gear over 72 unless you are a fellow of exceptional strength. It may be all right when you are full grown. **L.** (Sheffield).—The best place of all in which to keep a cycle in winter-time is a living room, or some other place where similar conditions prevail. A reasonable amount of warmth and a dry atmosphere are the chief desiderata. When the machine is put by let all bearings be oiled, and it is well to cover all bright parts with vaseline. The enamel may advantageously be also so treated in the case of an old mount, in order to protect "chippy" parts from rust. But at the best your machine cannot be kept in better condition than if it were in use and properly looked after. You talk of giving up riding in February. Why, after the vile weather of December? **A. K.** (Hampstead).—I do not recommend the parallel top tubes. To my eye they in no way improve the appearance. But that is not everything. It has been demonstrated that they are no stronger than a single top tube with the same amount of extra metal put into it. You see, what it gains in one way it partly loses in another, by putting a thrusting strain sideways on the main down tube, which it is not constructed to withstand. A tube passing from the seat lug to the fork crown has not this disadvantage. It breaks the frame into two triangles, and only sets up thrust at points where there are strong joints. The special frame of the Raleigh, or the one lately brought out by the Cycle Components people, are to be recommended for such exceptional weights as yours. **A Cycleman** (Llangollen). — If you know the hills of your own land well, and want an entire change, I can recommend no finer one than a tour in the eastern counties. The scenery is quite unique, and not by any means uninteresting. Indeed, I have toured there by the month together and still would go. The almost absolute flatness is beautifully broken up by wood and water, and the colouring is at all seasons such as to please and soothe the eye. You might vary the trip with a little exploration of the Norfolk and Suffolk broads, although, alas! they are not the unknown and sequestered region they were when I first steered my way amongst them. **E. Jones** (Great Marlow).—Acetylene may be the light of the future, and the genius of inventors has done much to make it more manageable and more trustworthy than it was at first; but it is still in the transition stage, and not on all points satisfactory. To my thinking it is too bright as at present arranged in any cycle lamp I know, and makes a breach of the good road rule of doing as you would be done by, by dazzling other fellows who may chance to meet you. There are plenty of good oils to be had. To name only two, "Springvale" or Lucas' "Britenwite" may be relied upon if properly used. I shall devote a future article to the subject of lamps and how to keep them, but have no space now. **Edward Morris** (Dulwich). — Yes, go back by all means and see the old places from your saddle. You will probably find the roads a trifle better than they used to be, but speaking generally they are still atrociously bad. The best roads I have struck in Ireland are in the romantic regions of the west, of which you speak—far from the railway and from civilization generally. The answer to your other question is "No." **W. J.** (Brighton).—The idea is very old, but it has never been successfully carried out. Consult the patent books and see what others have done. Sails might be an advantage under some circumstances, but they would have to be used by skilled hands. They would be very dangerous in such a wind as is blowing while I write.

H. P.



INTERNAL MECHANISM OF THE "PALACE" BELL.



By GORDON STABLES, M.D., R.N.

Author of "The Cruise of the Snow-Bird," "Our Home in the Silver West," etc., etc., etc.

Illustrated by George Hawley.

SYNOPSIS.—CHAPTERS I.—XV.

H.M.S. *Vengeful* goes to sea with sealed orders on the declaration of war between Great Britain and two European powers. The junior doctor—Elliot—who has newly joined the ship, arouses the suspicions of some of the officers by his strange, inquisitive ways. A watch is set on Elliot, who is caught, red-handed, stealing important documents from the commander's cabin. It is discovered that Elliot is a French spy, known in his own country as "Louis mon Brave." He is condemned to death, but escapes by diving over the ship's side and swimming to the Madagascan shore. The *Vengeful* proceeds on her course and is attacked by two French cruisers—the *Majuba* and the *Oromjé*. She sinks the *Oromjé*, and the *Majuba* surrenders at the close of a hot chase. They put in at Johanna to coal and repair, and the *Majuba* is re-christened, becoming H.M.S. *Ocean Prince*. While there, Commander Capel receives terrible news from the Admiralty—England has been invaded by France and Russia! He sends a deputation to the Sultan of Johanna to endeavour to secure the co-operation of his fast fleet of dhows. In this he is successful; and the two cruisers, with the torpedo destroyer *Tadpole*, put out to sea in search of the enemy. They reach Zanzibar, and Lieutenant Rawlings thinks of a plan to capture Louis mon Brave, who twice previously has eluded their vigilance. Disguised as Arabs, he and thirty of the *Vengeful's* crew steal out to sea in five dhows. They board and capture a Russian gunboat. Meanwhile the French spy returns to Johanna, sets free the French prisoners there, and attacks the British Consulate, which holds out for three days, when help arrives.

CHAPTER XVI.

"IT IS RAHZAB!"

THIS would be a pleasant world if evil were not so often in the ascendant, and pleasant would be the work of the patriotic historian if he had to speak only of battles won by his countrymen in the war. But reverses are bound to come. With nearly 500 men at his command—rapscallions though most of them were—it would have been strange indeed had not Louis mon Brave triumphed in his final attack on the consulate.

I must draw a veil over that battle—its fighting, its terrors, its massacre of every white man, save the Consul himself, and the capture of his wife and the poor girls whom our middies liked so much. True children of dear old England were they; a trifle thoughtless, perhaps; never looking a far way into the future, because so very content to live in the happy present, and never once dreaming of danger until that terrible morning, when Louis mon Brave and his liberated men appeared before the consulate and demanded its surrender. And now the inside of the little fort was like a shambles, and the whole family was taken prisoners, and thrown for the time being into the very prison, near the pier, in which the men of the *Majuba* had been incarcerated.

But Louis mon Brave, though determined that Cummings himself should meet a fearful fate, gave orders that his wife and children should be treated with kindness and respect. Their time might come, he hinted to Rigault, but—it must not be yet.

He smiled unpleasantly as he spoke these ominous words.

There was plenty to do, however; plenty to occupy Louis' time for a fortnight if he chose to wait here so long.

For hardly had the prisoners been carefully stowed away, ere scouts brought news that the rest of the Consul's men were advancing to attack the French with quite a little army.

"Very well," said Louis, as he lit a cigar, "we shall give them battle among the hills, my Rigault. And," he added, "when we beat them—as beat them we must—we shall pay Ben Ali a friendly

visit. His pretty palace needs looting, and our Arabs, as well as our own men, will find many nice trinkets therein, in the shape of jewellery and live stock, that will amply repay us for our trouble and adventure. The harem of that soft-hearted Sultan is——"

"Hullo!"

His speech was interrupted by the arrival of a scout.

"The English, with Ben Ali's Arabs, are but three hours' march from here." That was the news the scout had brought.

Louis laughed.

"We shall make ready at once to entertain them," he said. "I myself shall lead, *mon cher* Rigault. Gaublois, our sub-lieutenant, and fifty men shall stay to guard the prisoners."

That fight on the hills was a very long and bloody one, for the Englishmen, with their Arab allies, had entrenched themselves among the rocks, and were determined to resist to the last.

Assault after assault was made by the French—Louis mon Brave never leading in person, however. He was, as we know, brave to a fault, but he considered his life precious to himself and his country, and perhaps he was right. The battle, indeed, lasted all day long; the slopes of the mountains being littered with the enemy's dead and wounded, though the English hardly lost a man. Firing ceased with sunset, and a starless night succeeded.

Louis had retired to a little glen, about a mile nearer to the sea, after setting pickets and sentries, and here camp fires were lit; but after supper these were allowed to die down, and the men slept beside their piled arms, ready to spring to their feet and fall in should an alarm be given.

Rigault and Louis still sat by their own fire, however, and it was evident they were laying their plans for next day's action.

"I know every millimetre of ground round here," the latter was telling Rigault, "and *mon cher*, I will lead you to victory before sunrise. We outflank them you see. We get to their rear, while it is still dark. Then a front attack, which shall be but a feint, and the position shall be ours, carried from the heights behind. On then—on to hunt up Ben Ali. Ah! my friend, I tell you I mean that we shall make merry there. Ben Ali has a strong dungeon. It was contrived by himself for his particular friends. In it live a breed of green snakes, and black, and the imported cobras. No one comes alive from that pretty hole. Now, Ben Ali shall taste of its sweets himself. Often he has told me how he listened at night to the agonized screams of his victims, while he quaffed his wine—no, no, he is no true believer! We, *mon Rigault*, shall listen to *his* pretty voice as the snakes coil and writhe around him; and when all is still, then shall the dark-eyed beauties of the harem play and sing to us. Nay, we shall even make them dance—— But hark! Did you not hear a footstep?"

"It was but the wings of the flying squirrel among the branches," said Rigault carelessly.

"Well now, *mon ami*, we shall sleep a few hours, and to-morrow evening we shall sup in Ben Ali's palace."

On hands and knees a naked figure—a young black Arab—crept away from the tree against which Louis had been leaning, and in a very short time was back at the camp of the British.

When, next morning, Louis' men advanced to the attack, they found an empty camp. Their enemies had made good their retreat, and were at that very moment snugly entrenched near to the Sultan's palace.

Louis mon Brave smoked in silence for a short time, then laughed gaily.

"The English are clever, Rigault," he said. 'Let us have breakfast."

But that same evening the little French army was within striking distance of the town, and had thrown up trenches on a rising ground commanding the palace.

Had they possessed even one gun, ill would it have fared with Ben Ali and his people. On the other hand, though the Sultan possessed guns, they were merely for show, for no one knew where the shells and shot had been stored.

Gaublois, the young officer who had been left to guard the prison, was a Frenchman of the lowest caste, and the two midshipmen under him were much of the same type.

Nothing worthy of mention occurred on the first day, but on the afternoon of the second Gaublois commanded an orgie. There is no other way of expressing it. He took the precaution to set sentries on the land side of the pier and prison, however, and these he would keep sober, but to all the others wine was served out in gallons.

It might have been eleven o'clock at night—no one knew or cared—and the camp by the pier was reduced to a pandemonium—the French sailors hob-nobbing, drinking, singing, and shouting; while in a room by themselves the three officers were having what they considered a very happy time of it.

At last Gaublois stood up, and, while his body swayed to and fro, proposed the health of the lady prisoners. "But," he added, "let us now go and see them, and take them a bottle of wine. Why should not they, too, be happy?"

"Hurrah! Hurrah!" shouted his two companions. "Let us do as you say. Hurrah!"

They found the door of the prison-room strongly

barricaded from within, and they pleaded for entrance in vain.

Gaublois tried even to talk his best and prettiest English: "It ees not preesonaires you aire more longer," he cried. "It ees to be our friends. It is to sweeten the wine for us. We would make of you de free peoples."

But he lost his temper at last.

"An axe! An axe!" he shouted in French. "I am commandant, and I will not be treated thus!"

Two drunken sailors rushed up with handspikes, and commenced to batter in the door.

For a time they made no impression on it. Then there was a crash, and agonized screams from the interior of the room told that they were all too successful.

Some of them waved lighted torches on high; the brutal sailors who were not *hors de combat*, overcome by wine, now crowded around the prison door to cheer their officers on.

But their triumph was short-lived. For just at that moment—in the nick of time—a truly British cheer rang high above the maudlin shouts of these mad revellers, and at the head of their men, Merridale, Curtis, and Rawlings himself, came rushing along the pier.

The fight was a very brief one, for the French, thus taken aback, made but little show of resistance.

Gaublois was run through the body by Merridale's dirk; Curtis and Scott "scuppered" the other officers, and short indeed was the shrift the rest received from Arabs and bluejackets. Some escaped, but no prisoners were taken. Nor were even the wounded permitted to live.

In less than half an hour Consul Cummings, with his wife and daughters, was safe and sound on board the largest dhow, and Merridale, as he squatted next to Aggie at the midnight supper that was spread on the deck, was perhaps the happiest middie in the Royal Navy, for the time being at all events.

But more work had to be done at sunrise. The narrow entrance to the great natural harbour had been guarded by two of Rawlings' dhows, so that escape for any of Louis mon Brave's vessels was out of the question. Then at daybreak these were boarded, and were found deserted.

They were all burned.

As silently now as he had glided in by night, with his spirit-like fleet, did Rawlings sail away.

* * * * *

Louis mon Brave and his rapscallion army encountered far greater resistance from Ben Ali's Arabs than they had expected. The Arabs even proved themselves adepts in throwing up trenches.

These men, in days gone by, used to be armed with an obsolete sort of gun, called by courtesy a rifle, and it was surprising what good practice they used to make therewith. But the soldiers who opposed Louis' advance were furnished with the very newest pattern of British rifle, so that from behind their earthworks they were able to pour a fearful fire upon the foe when they advanced to the assault.

Louis mon Brave had little mercy on his own men, and sacrificed their lives in repeated attacks. They fought like furies, too, and many succeeded in leaping, cutlass in hand, into the trenches. These, however, were speedily spitted by long Arab swords, and their bodies hurled back into the very faces of their advancing comrades.

So the unequal contest went on for a whole week.

But the heart of Louis mon Brave beat high with joy when one morning his attention was called to a long low craft of war that was seen steaming towards the city. Of Russian build undoubtedly, and carrying a Russian flag.

Here was luck! Here was joy!

The men fired their rifles, and waved their jackets on high to bid her welcome.

Luck vanished, however, and joy was turned to grief when a shell from this Russian's sturdy little low turret came shrieking towards them and burst within 20yds. of the trenches. A second flew high overhead, then a third was plugged right into their centre, and fifteen men lay dead or wounded when it exploded.

Louis mon Brave's army was entrenched on a bare hillside, and escape seemed impossible in the face of such a fire.

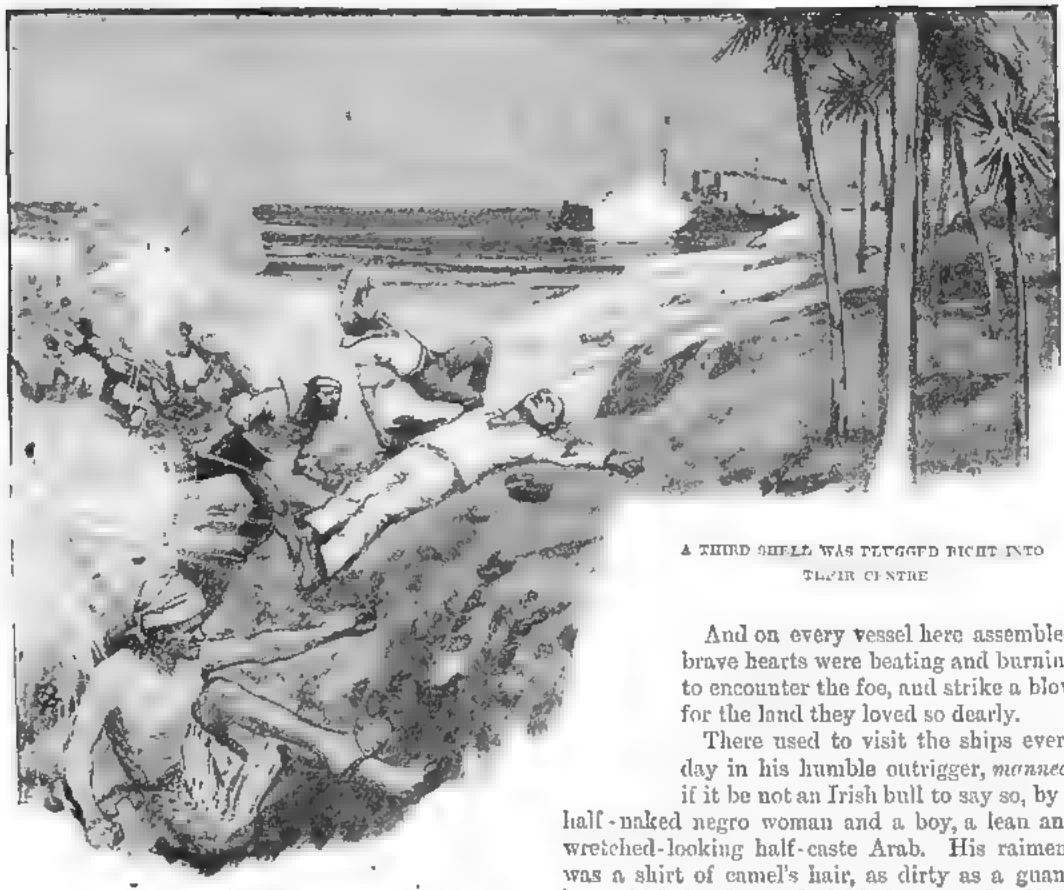
But when the position became absolutely untenable, and Rawlings was seen landing to the attack with bluejackets and Arabs, *sauve qui peut* was the cry, and Louis mon Brave and Rigault also were among the very first to fly.

Both subsequently escaped in a dhow and sailed away, no one knew whither.

The island was soon afterwards completely cleared of the enemy, and a new consulate established close to the Arab town.

I think there was quite as much romance and sentiment to the square inch about Merridale as you find in any British middie. As he bade Aggie good-bye at last, the evening before starting for Zanzibar in the captured Russian gunboat, his quotations from English poets, especially from Byron, proved that his memory was certainly a remarkable one, and that the boy believed himself very much in love.

Parting seemed such sweet sorrow that—well, even Romeo's impassioned words and tones would have appeared flat to Merridale's.



A THIRD SHELL WAS PLUGGED RIGHT INTO THEIR CENTRE

The fleet which lay off Zanzibar about three weeks after this, all ready to start, was but a small one, it is true, but capable enough nevertheless of doing terrible execution against the cruisers that were still in the Indian Ocean, sinking and burning every British craft they could overhaul.

Here was the *Vengeful*, who by this time might well have been called the terror of the seas; the *Ocean Prince*, the *Plevna*, or gunboat so neatly and prettily captured by Rawlings with his merry men, and the tender *Tadpole*, not long returned from her unsuccessful attempt to raise the French submarine boat.

As additional tenders were the hired Arab dhows of Ben Ali, each with its little pennant fluttering gaily out in the breeze.

The *Plevna* was really a powerful little craft, having no less than three splendid guns, beside torpedo tubes, and her speed was over forty knots an hour.

I have said nothing of the submergible boat Her turn for action might come.

And on every vessel here assembled brave hearts were beating and burning to encounter the foe, and strike a blow for the land they loved so dearly.

There used to visit the ships every day in his humble outrigger, *manned*, if it be not an Irish bull to say so, by a half-naked negro woman and a boy, a lean and wretched-looking half-caste Arab. His raiment was a shirt of camel's hair, as dirty as a guano bag, which barely reached his knees, and a little straw skull-cap. His legs were no thicker than a boat's oar. But he used to do good business with the Jacks — selling them eggs, fowls, and fruit, and bringing their washing on board.

All night long, round and round the fleet, boats rowed sentry, and every suspicious craft coming off was overhauled and boarded. But no one took any heed of Rahzah. Sometimes even, when it was close on midnight, he paddled towards the *Vengeful* or *Ocean Prince* with an officer who had got belated while rambling in the bush or playing cards at the big hotel.

No one heeded Rahzah, no one suspected him, and indeed some of the bluejackets, or stokers, rather loved him than otherwise. And yet this wretched being, whose lank, lean visage bore an expression of settled melancholy, was chosen as a tool by Louis mon Brave, who with Rigault had managed to reach Zanzibar in the disguise of a Parsee, to assist in as dastardly a deed as ever was attempted since the destruction of the *Maine* at Cuba by the cowardly Spaniards.

So well was the fleet guarded that no one save Rahzah could have succeeded in attaching a line

to the bottom of the great flag ship, and paddling quietly on shore with the end thereof. This line was of wire, and thin, yet it was capable enough of guiding a torpedo of exceptional power right under the very bottom of the *Vengeful*, where it could be exploded from the shore by means of electricity.

Close to the little Arab burying ground on the sands, where so many skulls and bones of slaves lie bleaching, and on the very night before the little flying squadron was to sail, two men sat quietly smoking their cigarettes and gazing seawards. A gentle swell was on; the long waves lisped lazily on the white beach as they broke into foam; the war-ships, with their bobbing, blinking, yellow lights, rose and fell drowsily; the sky was star-studded, and low on the horizon were great, white, rolling clouds, lit up almost incessantly by tropical lightning. That was the seascape. Behind the men all was darkness, for it was long past midnight. Silent, too, save when now and then a long, quavering yell rose and died away—the shriek of an Arab sentinel.

A boat passed between the men and the ships, and suddenly from its bows shot the dazzling splendour of a searchlight.

But the men lay flat beside the bank, and in a few minutes a sturdy English sentry's voice might have been heard shouting: "All's well!"

If anyone was awake in the midshipmen's hammocks he but turned on his side when he heard the hail, and, feeling safe and secure, soon fell fast asleep.

Suddenly a dug-out was beached just beside the graveyard, and Rahzah himself glided silently on shore, and stood like an apparition between those men and the stars.

"It is you, Rahzah?"

"It is Rahzah!"

CHAPER XVII.

"IF I WERE LOUIS MON BRAVE," SAID RAWLINGS.

THE two men who sat smoking on the beach near to the ghastly burying-place had been silent for some time.

"Louis," said one presently, "you are certain everything is arranged?"

"Yes; but hush, Rigault, speak lower. Arab sentries have ears like devils, and are strangely suspicious. Ha! here comes Rahzah."

"You have done what I told you?" said Louis.

"All, all, and everything silent as that skull."

He lightly kicked some bones as he spoke, for all around was a Golgotha of bones.

"Then go, my good Rahzah, I will see you to-morrow. Paddle silently to the shore farther up, and let no one observe you."

Next moment the men were alone.

The time had not yet arrived, however. They must wait till the guard-boat had passed. So they lay quiet and smoked.

A huge torpedo was already at anchor not 50yds. from them. One touch to the spring of the apparatus which Rigault carried would set it free, and then——

Jooma the Fifth, as he was called on board the *Vengeful*, was the interpreter and spy belonging to that ship. A very little man, an Arab, but as black as printers' ink nevertheless. He was a silent and most uncomely dwarf. Perhaps he had found out that silence was silvern; anyhow, no man on board ever succeeded in making this Jooma talk about anything that did not refer to business.

However, he had been faithful hitherto to every British ship on the coast that had engaged him.

Jooma had been permitted to go on shore on this particular night to say good-bye to his family, but with orders to be off on the stroke of two bells in the middle watch.

It was some time past his usual hour, however, before he made his way to the beach, and Jooma was the soul of punctuality.

He met Rahzah.

"Ah, you'll do! Quick!" he cried. "Row me out to the *Vengeful*. Speed you, speed you!" This in English.

"No—me not row."

"What you tell to Jooma? You scoundarailе! You not row a British officer! I shoot you quick! Come!"

The sight of the revolver was enough, and next minute Jooma was seated in the little boat, and Rahzah was paddling seawards.

He slowed when near the ship, however, and presently, to Jooma's astonishment, dropped his paddles and sprang overboard.

At that moment there was a hail from the ship, "Boat ahoy!"

"Ay, ay—quick!"

There was a slight commotion on board now, and men with lanterns hurried down the starboard ladder to the water's edge to receive Jooma.

He sprang up the side like a cat. This was no time for ceremony. Jooma had something in his hand which he must show to the commander at once.

In two minutes' time he stood in Capel's cabin.

"Up, sir—up! Quick—quick! The ship will be deestroy soon—soon!"

Capel was stupefied for a moment, but soon came to his senses, and by the light which Jooma had turned on he examined the things which the

MERRIDALE WAS ON THE BRIDGE OF THE *VENGEFUL* AT THE TIME.

dwarf thrust into his hands—some pieces of wire and some strange tools.

These had been found in Rahzah's boat.

"Quick—again I say!" cried Jooma. "Evil men have put one topeedo undah you sheep!"

Capel jumped to the situation at once, and all round the ship—quietly but quickly—an examination was made, and the wire from the shore was found and cut.

The affair did not end quite here, however.

For, only a few minutes after this—so narrow had the escape of the *Vengeful* been—Louis mon Brave touched the spring, and silently away spun the awful torpedo on its mission of death and destruction.

Louis had determined to court no failure. The torpedo was one of those which move by compressed air, and which explode at once on hitting an object, but should it not strike with sufficient force, the arch-spy had means by which to communicate an electric spark to its magazine after a given time.

On this occasion that given time never came, for hardly had the torpedo left the shore ere Rahzah sprang up out of the sea and made a rush towards the conspirators to alarm them. He tripped on something, and severed the tiny connecting wire.

Now a wild bull at large is an ugly customer to meet, but an escaped torpedo, which has been well wound up, and is well loaded, is a thousand times more dangerous.

When that particular torpedo, which Louis mon Brave had launched, found itself at the end of its tether or wire, it was free. The cut end, however, had sunk, and somehow deviated this submarine thunderbolt from its course, and thus saved the *Vengeful*.

It gave its wicked tail an extra wriggle, and ploughed boldly on. It pressed close under the stern of the *Ocean Prince*, but didn't touch; then it made straight for an Englishman's yacht, but a stray shark wonderingly nosed it, and turned it out of that course. It passed dangerously near to many merchantmen, then went merrily heading out to sea.

But the holiday of that frolicsome torpedo came speedily to an end, else it might have gone far enough.

Whether it was the ocean current itself, or a shoal of jelly fish, or a wandering bonito, I could not say, but something touched it forward on the port bow. Then, instead of heading any longer for the ocean wide and wild, it once more took another direction, and bore straight for the Sultan's powder ship, which was anchored some distance from the place where vessels lay.

There were only five Arabs on board that craft, and Merridale, who was on the bridge of the *Vengeful* at the time of the appalling explosion, told his messmates next day that he distinctly saw those five men high in air, in the cataract of flame and débris, holding on their turbans with both hands. They seemed to be taking a westerly direction, as if they wanted to get on shore as quickly as possible, but were speedily swallowed up in the darkness.

Anyhow, the *Vengeful* escaped a fearful fate; but so violent was the explosion that ships were shaken to their very keels, and houses blown down on shore, while the boats moored near to the beach were lifted bodily and cast high, if not dry, on the sands.

So grateful was Captain Bullard, his officers and men, for the services of the dwarf, that a collection was made for him at divisions next day, and he was presented with a bag of gold, silver, and copper pice that quite took his breath away.

Capel was determined if possible to capture the spy. "In the island he must be," he said at the mess-table, "A blockade could be established," he continued, "and every vessel searched, as well as the city itself."

Rawlings only smiled.

"If I were Louis," he said, quietly, "I would be far enough away ere now. We can see the hand of the arch-spy in this attempt to blow us up, but he would have sailed immediately after the failure of the plot. I should have done so."

At this very moment a dhow was seen in the offing, making all sail shorewards, for a good breeze was now blowing. She was flying the pennant, and was therefore one of the *Vengeful's* auxiliary fleet.

Hardly, therefore, had she dropped anchor before a man-of-war's boat was being rowed rapidly towards her, Mr. Merridale in command, and Rawlings himself in the stern sheets.

CHAPTER XVIII.

"BUT—WE SHALL BE FREE!"

Up and down the broad and wide quarter-deck of the *Vengeful* paced Commander Capel, all the time the boat was gone. Swiftly too, for his feet were keeping pace with his thoughts. This gallant sailor had but few home ties—an aged father and mother, but neither sister, brother, nor wife.

Stay though—he *had* a wife. His ship was that wife, and he dearly loved her. Few officers of the navy have what can be called real zeal for the service in time of peace, but this was a time of patriotism. We were at war, and I do not

think there was a man or boy fore or aft in this mighty cruiser, whose heart did not thrill to think and believe himself to be part and parcel of a navy unparalleled in history—a power which, despite the fact that the enemy had succeeded in effecting a landing on our shores, would in the end sweep that invader off the ocean, and hurl him back, crushed and broken, upon the shores he had dared to sail from. Even the midshipmen were imbued by the same spirit as their elders and seniors, and, terrible though the tidings had been which the now severed cable brought from England, they lived in hope, and were spoiling for more battle and strife.

The news which Rawlings returned with soon spread throughout the ship, and men were seen standing everywhere in knots to discuss it. A glance would have told the veriest landlubber that, shoulder to shoulder around their guns or down in the awful heat of the stoke-holes, those brave bluejackets would stand on the battle-deck when the day of tussle came, and bravely do or die.

"Well, Rawlings?"

"Yes, sir, Louis mon Brave has fled. Did so early this morning. Bore up for the east. No doubt with the intention of joining his own war-dhows and meeting and fighting ours."

"Well?"

"Well, his two swiftest have escaped the vigilance of our dhow-fleet, and by this time the secrets of our submarine boats, our code of telephone and telegraphic signals, and everything else may be known in France."

"Bad news."

"Yes, Captain Capel, and he is a brave man, and true, who commands that flag-dhow; a long-headed man, too. He tells me that without a doubt our exact strength will now be made known to the combined Russian and French cruisers at the entrance to the Red Sea, and that a sufficient naval force will be despatched to sweep us off the sea.

"By heaven!" exclaimed Capel, sternly and determinedly, "they will find their mistake. But here comes Captain Bullard, and this is no time to waste words; we must call a council of war and act immediately."

"Undoubtedly, Capel, undoubtedly!" That was all the good captain said just then.

What was agreed to at that council of war, to which the acting captains of the *Ocean Prince* and *Plevna* were invited, was not divulged to the men forward, although Jack Howard, whose duties happened to call him aft to the captain's quarters, told his messmates he had heard Bullard addressing Mr. Rawlings in the following words, which had been received with a cheer by the others.

"He says there are four Frenchmen and three Russians coming for us. Eh! Pah! the odds is insignificant. Capel, we'll give them battle."

At the council held this forenoon, Rawlings, the clever and astute detective, had made many suggestions that commended themselves to Capel and his Captain, and, acting upon one of these, no movement or stir was observable on any ship of the fleet that day. They lay as quietly at their anchorage as if they did not mean to move for a month.

The Parsee and Hindoo merchants chuckled to themselves as they turned in, and so, too, did the seller of the vile gin and arrack. The British fleet would lie here for weeks yet, and Jack and Joe continue to squander their money.

But lo! when the sun shone red and dazzling over the waves next morning, never a ship was to be seen, and even the swift dhow had gone. Hindoos and Parsees ran to their offices to scan their books uneasily. But no, not a man in the British fleet owed them a penny. The excitement was over, therefore, in Zanzibar—for a time, at all events. The show was closed; the Russian and French consuls rehoisted their flags, and even the Sultan breathed more freely.

We must leave this city now, however, and follow our little fleet of cruisers.

That fleet was rushing northwards, then, at fullest speed, and without doubt a great battle would soon be fought either off Aden or in the Red Sea itself. For Bullard and his officers had not been slow to recognize the urgency of affairs as they now stood. Nor did they hesitate to grant to Louis mon Brave and his excellent Lieutenant Rignult, all the credit that was their due. It was no child's game that this masterful spy had been playing, and the stakes were probably of greater value than nations had ever played for before in the world. This was no ordinary war; it was a struggle to the death, or the final triumph of Britannia, who, till now, had reigned as, and been recognized by every nation as, mistress of the seas. As yet the French and Russians had the best of it. They had invaded our shores, and even at this very moment, while the *Vengeful* and her consorts were ploughing their way bravely northwards through the blue waves of the Indian Ocean, England, and a large portion of Scotland, was overrun by the armies of France. Having once seized the southern shores, having once got possession of the Straits of Dover and the Channel, their transports continued to land soldiers, ammunition and guns in a never-ending stream.

Our troops were beaten back in every direction, and though London was yet uncaptured, it was in a state of seige. Her brave sons were fighting

in trenches, for forts there were none, and although the water supply was abundant, if help did not arrive, the city would be starved and obliged to capitulate in a few months' time at the farthest. Everyone who had been able to leave the great city had already gone, and the county was by this time one vast widely-spread service of isolated camps. Railway traffic had mostly been suspended, and telegraphic communication between the cities was, for the time, a thing of the past.

In every war, just as in an upstanding fight between two men, victory is almost half ensured to the combatant who can land the first well-placed blow. The combined forces of Russia and France had succeeded in planting that first blow with a celerity which did them credit, and for the time-being Britain lay panting and bleeding at their feet. She was not demoralised, it is true. She was even preparing for another spring; and if she could maintain the unequal contest until some great success could be gained by our navy at sea, war's red tide might be rolled back amain, and final victory be assured.

But there were cowards and pessimists in every town nevertheless, who told their friends quietly—though they dared not preach such doctrine openly—that the navy could assist them no more; that Britain had seen her day; that her sun was now setting, encrimsoned with blood, amidst the thunderclouds of battle and strife; and that this was the fate of all too-grasping nations.

Yet why should they mourn, even if for the future they must be a third-rate power, and no longer honoured in the councils of the nations? Peace would arise with healing in its wings, and that alone could bring happiness and surcease of sorrow.

Another class longed for the intervention of other nations; Italy would help us, brave Japan was already preparing for war against Russia, and America could not afford to see England wiped off the map of the world.

I am glad to say that this class was in the minority.

"No! no! no!" cried the true British hearts. "Avast with intervention! We ask not the assistance of a single gun from a foreign nation. Such assistance means disgrace. Britain must bear the brunt of the storm, and, all alone in the conflict, fighting triumph, or fighting die."

CHAPTER XIX.

"MAN AND ARM THE SUBMARINE!"

ALTHOUGH Bullard's bold little fleet was, in a manner of speaking, quite cut off from its home base, and no news could reach it as to the terrible state of affairs in that now unhappy country, the captain could guess the whole truth and imagine more.

If France and her ally, Russia, had so far won the game at home, they had been but little less successful here in the Indian Ocean. It is true that we had sunk one great man-o'-war and captured another; but this success had been as nothing compared to that scored by the enemy through the genius of the arch-spy, Louis mon Brave.

He had not only managed to wrench from the British the secret of their submergible boat, which in itself counted for many points in the war game now being played, but he had stolen many other secret papers, and made himself thorough master of our private code of signals.

Had it been possible to telegraph home to the Admiralty that such loss had taken place, the code might have been altered, the cipher changed.

The only hope which now remained, although this was almost a forlorn one, lay in the off-chance the *Vengeful* had of either overtaking or intercepting the two swift dhows which had been despatched by Louis to bear this code of signals to the French ships in the Red Sea.

These dhows, fleet though they were, could not defy weather and storms, and besides, they were almost certain to be becalmed on the line.

Two of the most marvellous discoveries, or inventions, were now in use, not only in our own navy, but in that of other nations, namely, wireless telegraphy and wireless telephony.

But another invention had been added to these, and although any two friendly ships could converse with each other even at a distance of 100 miles, intervening men-o'-war belonging to the enemy had now an apparatus—partly kite, partly balloon—by means of which they could search the sky above them, and so get in touch with a portion of the electric wave by which the message was being transmitted. This message, be it remembered, would still pass on intact, and neither of the two friendly ships would know that it had been tapped or interfered with.

So perfect were the instruments for intercepting and reading messages sent through the air from ship to ship that even submarine boats, lying like sharks in waiting far below the surface of the ocean, could hurl these skywards, catch the telegram, and then quietly change their position, lest a single bubble on the water should reveal their presence to a watchful foe.

It will easily be seen, therefore, how important it was now that either Louis mon Brave's dhows should be overhauled by Bullard's fleet, or, if this were impossible, that the enemy's ships in receipt

of the stolen signal codes should be attacked, captured, or destroyed before they had a chance to send the secrets to France and Russia.

And that was the stake for which the *Vengeful* was now playing. Success in the game would not necessarily avert the danger that hung pall-like over Britain; but defeat would undoubtedly lead to the gravest disaster, and interfere materially with the efficiency of her navy when going into action.

The captain of our "flag-dhow," as the fastest of this strange fleet was termed, was a tall handsome Arab, said to be a scion of the prophet. He therefore wore the green mantle which indicated his rank. He was taken on board the *Vengeful*, the command of his war-dhow devolving on his lieutenant, another most energetic gentleman Arab.

Mahmed's first lieutenant had orders to rejoin the other vessels of the flying dhow-fleet, and together to go in quest of the dhows of Louis mon Brave—to fight, sink, and destroy them if possible; and, if not, to harass them in every possible manner, keeping them ever in sight and delaying the arch-spy's voyage to the Red Sea.

And now that our ships were fairly under weigh, there were no longer any secrets kept from them. Jack really hates to sail with his eyes shut.

Somehow the favourite bos'n's mate was the first to receive intimation. He was no longer "mate," however, but promoted to full-blown bo's'n. Capel himself — and he loved and respected this honest fellow — gave him the news.

It was on the very evening of the day they had sailed that the commander called him into his cabin as he was lurching along the gallery, for it was blowing stiffly—one of those fearful gales, in fact, that come sweeping over the Indian Ocean in the autumn of the year (south the line).

"Oh! Harris, here you are. Haven't seen a deal of you lately—privately, I mean—but I don't forget we are old friends and were boys together. Come inside."

"Ah, sir, and I never forgets those dear old times in Cornwall. Mind upon our fishing adventures, sir? I used to call you 'Charlie' in those days."

THE BOLD MIDDY SWUNG HIMSELF OVER THE SIDE AND INSTANTLY DISAPPEARED.

"Yes, indeed. Help yourself, Tom; there stands the bottle, and it's at your service any time you like to pop in. I don't touch it at present, because we'll soon be going into action, lad."

"Well, sir, I guessed as much, or dreamt it, or something, sir. God send us the victory!"

"Amen!"

"Bearing up for the Red Un, ain't we?"

"That's it, Tom."

They had a little kindly conversation now about dear old boyhood days spent in bonnie Cornwall, then Captain Capel gave a little sigh as he said, "Well, Tom, old man, have another liquor, and you can go. We'll be all happy yet, and I'm going to take you on a tour when I get home."

Tom helped himself sparingly.

"And may I mention forward where we're bound for, sir?"

"Certainly," said the commander. Then he laughed. "I think," he added, "that the best and quickest way to spread the news, Tom, will be for you to tell Bobby Blair in confidence."

The wind howled and moaned that night at a terrific rate. The great ship shivered fore and aft as in such weather great ships do, and the seas often dashed in foam high over the fo'c'sle; but down below in Jack's mess—in every mess forward—many a song was sung and many a hearty yarn spun, for the men were just as merry as men could be.

But what a heavenly morning after that fearsome night, for in the middle watch it had been blowing a gale more terrific than the oldest sailor on board ever remembered!

The *Vengeful* had weathered it all unscathed, however, and so had her consort, the *Ocean Prince*.

The *Tadpole* and *Plevna* were not visible. But the ocean was now swept by wireless telegraphy, and, ere long, back from both came the gladsome message—"All's well."

Both were astern.

Warm on deck, hotter still below, but melting in the stoke holds, and during the day both O'Shane and McDrift had plenty to do—the real Elliot, by the way, was doing duty on the *Ocean Prince*—for man after man of the black gang was hoisted up wet and limp, and to all appearance dead.

The *Vengeful* waited not at present for the rest of the fleet, but went ploughing on at even greater speed than ever. The *Tadpole* could keep the course and the *Plevna* too.

Only when she was well over the line was she stopped, and this for the purpose of submarine drill. The great derricks were speedily unlimbered, and by the invisible power of electricity, the matchless sea-dragon was elevated and easily lowered over the side.

Right merrily now went the bos'n's pipe, for it was not all button-work on board the *Vengeful*. Commander Capel, and Bullard too, liked to see the bare feet and busy arms of his crew, as they rushed hither and thither at work on the decks.

"Away—ay—ay—!—*Dragon's* crew! Man and arm the su'marine."

And the "su'marine" was manned and armed in the twinkling of a handspike.

They were indeed a strangely dressed crew that manned her, but every soul there knew his own particular duty.

It would have been difficult indeed for anyone not behind the scenes to have told that the curious little marked figure to whom Capel handed a card was Midshipman Merridale.

"Here are your instructions, sir, and the evolutions are to be performed precisely as noted. Go."

"Ay, ay, sir," cried the bold middy, as he swung himself over the side and instantly disappeared.

And next moment the sea-dragon had gone. Look where one might, across or around that smooth and oily ocean, not a bubble was there to indicate the presence of the most perfect "su'marine" that ever sank. She might have gone to Davie Jones for all that anyone on board the *Vengeful*, with the single exception of Capel, in his conning tower, could tell.

Capel was the soul of the ship. Capel was conversing, by wire, with Merridale, and Merridale was, most of the time, two or three thousand yards away.

The strange drill was kept up for some hours, then came Merridale's last message to Capel.

"I'm going to blow you sky-high, sir, if you please."

The reply was "Communication now severed. Blow away if you can, but you've got to find us first."

Hardly had this message been flashed, ere Capel's fingers were busy on as many buttons as if the semi-circle in front of him was some new species of type-writer.

In less than a quarter of a minute, he had put himself in communication with every portion of the mighty ship, and was issuing orders to all quarters.

Clear indeed must be the head of him who mans the conning tower!

CHAPTER XX.

"MAY GOD HELP YOU, BOY."

THERE was not a ship to be seen upon this part of the Indian Ocean, except the *Vengeful* and the *Ocean Prince*, but, had some merchant vessel been

passing at this moment, and had she directed her lorgnettes towards the former, puzzled indeed would the master-mariner have been at beholding her movements. There was only one conclusion that he could have come to.

"Whoever is commanding that ship," he would have told his mate, "has gone suddenly out of his mind."

Has the reader ever heard of a battle 'twixt the thrasher and the whale? Here it was then, or here it seemed to be, but on a larger scale than any battle of the kind ever beheld by eyes of seafarer. The *Sea Dragon* or *Warlock*, as she was called by McDrift, was the thrasher, the *Vengeful* was the whale. Round and round went the latter, with helms hard a-port, and almost on her own length, the sea for 100yds. all around her and fathoms deep churned into foam by special machinery. Other precautions also were taken for the purposes of defence against the dreaded su'marine.

Then once more all was still, and presently the *Sea Dragon* was lying quietly along the star-board quarter. Up the side slowly now came little Merridale, and staggered aft.

Capel himself rushed to meet him, and seized his outstretched hand.

"Are we blown up?" he said. "But—why you are ill, my son!"

Merridale's voice sounded very far away as he made answer:

"Yes — you're in heaven, now, sir—or—somewhere else."

Then down dropped the brave middy, and was borne gently forward to the sick bay.

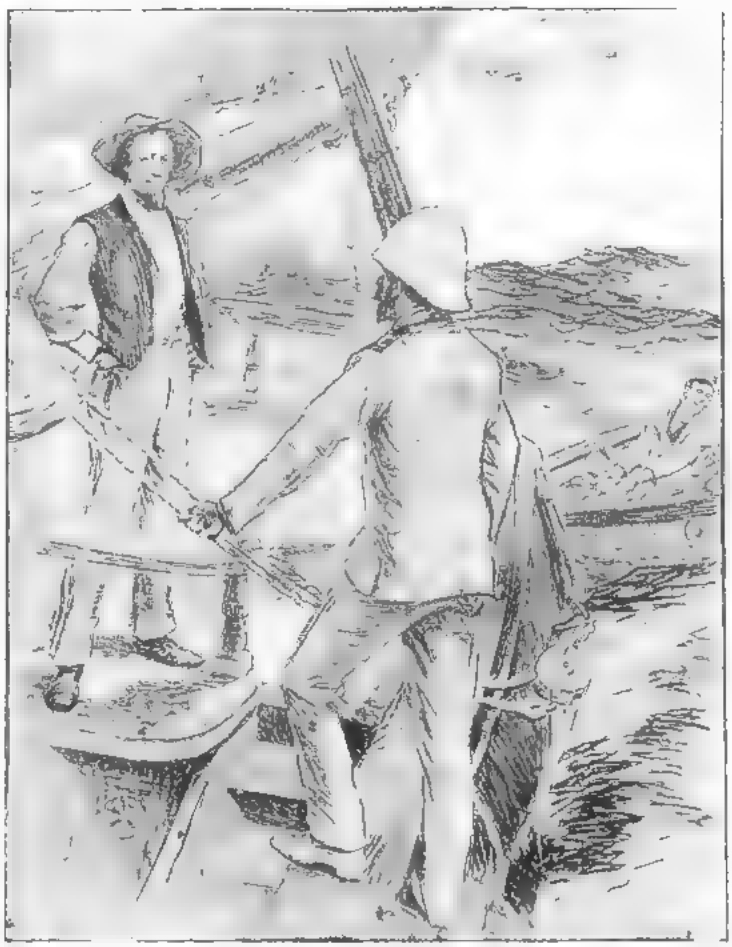
There is nothing more successful than success, and in less than half an hour the *Sea Dragon* was safe and sound in its old quarters, and Merridale, and all his little men, were their merry little selves again.

During these evolutions, the *Tadpole* and *Plevna* had come up, and soon the whole of the fleet was *en voyage* for the north, but spread out in open order just within sight-signalling distance.

* * * * *

Mahmed, the captain of the flag dhow, was most earnest in duty, and seldom indeed during the day was he absent from the *Vengeful's* foretop. He had in his hands one of the best portable telescopes on board, and with this he was never tired of searching the horizon.

Many a dhow was sighted, but when appealed to concerning these, he would only shake his head or reply, "No, Allah has not heard my prayers yet."



CAPEL WAS MET ON THE QUARTER-DECK BY A LANTERN-JAWED YANKEE OF THE OLD SCHOOL.

He even came on duty at night, and, by aid of the searchlight, scanned the sea on every side. He had been offered a spare cabin below, but smilingly refused, nor would he deign even to eat in the ward room. His bed by night was a grass mat, spread on deck, and his food, rice boiled by his own servant, with dates and fruit galore. His drink was water only.

Nevertheless, this strange being was a great

favourite with everyone, especially with the gun-room officers, and many an evening during this memorable voyage did Merridale, Curtis, Scott, and others sit round him, as he squatted tailor-fashion in the fo'c'sle, and listen to the wonderful stories he had to tell of his adventures in the far interior of Africa. Bobby Blair was never far off while these yarns were being spun, and, with a hand behind each ear and eyes as big as florins, he lay on his stomach behind the charmed circle, and greedily indeed did he drink in every word.

Several of the dhows were boarded, but they could not, or would not, give any news that was of the slightest use to Capel and Bullard.

Partial success at last however! Mahmed simply pointed to a dhow and smiled, and swift though this craft was on a leading wind, she was soon overhauled.

Among her papers on board were found copies of the British code of signals, and plans of the famous submergible boat, and every item of information that Louis mon Brave, prince of spies, had so cleverly obtained. These, of course, were destroyed, but as the surly black Arab who commanded could give no clue to the whereabouts of the sister-dhow, he and his vessel were left alone in their glory, but not before every sail and spar was taken out of her, and in this plight she would have to float like a log till rescue came.

The other dhow, it was sadly evident, had reached the Red Sea, and our secrets would probably by this time be in the hands of the enemy.

There might be time yet, however, for she could not have managed to get very far ahead of her consort.

While still a long way off Aden, the black cinder or rock which is so familiar to every tourist who travels to or from India, a barque was sighted, and though she hoisted the stars and stripes, and was forging ahead on her voyage to the south, a shot was fired across her hawse, and she was obliged to heave to.

Capel himself boarded her, and was met on the quarter-deck by the master, a long, lantern-jawed Yankee of quite the old school.

"I say, Britisher," he drawled, before Captain Capel had time to put in a word, "you've got a darned good cheek for a representation of a fifth-class naval power."

Capel smiled. "What do you mean?" he said.

"Come off!" cried the Yankee. "What are ye giving me? D'ye mean to tell me that you don't know that Britain's whipped at last; that there ain't another kick in her; that your country is captured, and going to be sliced up among the powers; that London's fell, and that the streets of the French port of Aden—ay, French now, so you needn't grin—is placarded only yesterday with news of the disaster, and capture of the whole blessed Channel fleet? Ya as, grin again, it becomes you, for an unbelievin' dogoned son of a British sea cook."

"But there!" he added, sticking out his fist, "shake, old man, I can't forget we once was friends! And now I'll give you a tip. Go right away back to your bit of a fleet, and haul down your bunting, and turn your jib to the south'ard, 'cause seven ships, French and Russian, sail day after to-morrow to sweep ye clean off the briny ocean. Will ye liquor? No? Will ye smoke or chew? Very well, take my tip and turn tail. So-long, capting, changes will occur, ye know. Now, mate"—this to his first officer—"stand by to fill the fore-yard."

By sunset the fleet was but eighty miles from Aden. The Yankee skipper had given Capel a tip, and he was going to take it too, but certainly not in the way he had advised.

Ere it was quite dark, the ships were stopped, and now lay close together. Moreover, the *Warlock* or *Sea Dragon* was once more alongside, and Merridale and his crew were awaiting orders.

The terrible little craft had no less than five torpedoes on board, and extra hands would be sent to manœuvre them.

The commanding officers of the *Ocean Prince*, the *Plevna*, and the *Tadpole* stepped on board the *Vengeful*; Capel and his captain had quite made up their minds as to what they should do before asking them to come on board.

There was a murmur of applause when Capel stated the case. Then these officers had their orders, and soon after left just as quietly as they had come.

And now Merridale took his card of instructions from Capel's hand.

"Good-bye, sir," he said.

No sign of tremor in that brave young voice.

"Good-bye, good-bye; and may God help you, boy!"

Every head was uncovered, and tears were trembling in the eyes of more than one bold mariner, as the boy went silently over the side and disappeared in the gloom.

(To be concluded.) Frank Stables

The SECRET of the IDOL

BY W. MURRAY GRAYDON

AN UNPLEASANT surprise was in store for Luke Tearle, agent and manager to London's largest dealer in wild animals, when he came down one morning to Hans Goldbeck's emporium at Wapping, near the Tower Bridge. He arrived at an unusually early hour, for a couple of important consignments were to be made ready and shipped that day. He unlocked the door of the private office, entered the room, and saw before his eyes unmistakable evidence of a nocturnal visit. In the middle of the floor a pyramid, composed of a large table, a smaller one, and an arm chair, towered to within 4ft. of an open skylight overhead. An ordinary pocket-knife, with its single blade snapped off at the hilt, lay near the fireplace. Otherwise the room was apparently undisturbed. Neither the desk drawers nor the safe had been tampered with, and a fresh box of cigars was unopened.

"It's a queer business," said Hans Goldbeck, who turned up within a few minutes of his assistant. "The fellow seems to have been scared off before he got to work. Hullo, what's this?"

As he spoke he drew open the door of an upright glass cabinet that stood in a corner, the shelves of which were filled with all sorts of rare and valuable curios, from a string of Aztec beads to the preserved head of a Carib Indian.

"The lock has been forced," he added. "That accounts for the broken knife. But there is only one thing missing—the little gold idol."

"You mean the Ashanti fetish," said Tearle. "Nothing else?"

"That's all. But the idol is gone, right enough; and I fancy I know who stole it. You remember the chap who dropped in yesterday morning — Vanberg he called himself? He palavered for an hour about buying some bears for a travelling menagerie, and promised to return to-day, which he won't do. For that case caught his eye, and he gave it half his attention while he was here. Yes, Vanberg is the thief."

"I am inclined to agree with you. Yet why would he be satisfied with the idol?"

"That's the queer part of it," replied Goldbeck. "He could have stuffed his pockets with things equally valuable, or more so."

"I took a good look at the man," said Tearle. "He was a German, and his skin had the peculiar and unmistakable yellow tint left by West African fever; which is, at least, a suggestive coincidence."

"How so?"

"Because that diminutive idol came from the Gold Coast, as you are aware. A Haussa soldier picked it up in the forest a year ago near the borders of Ashantiland, and shortly after the British troops entered Coomassie and dethroned King Prempeh. I bought it from the Haussa at Cape Coast Castle."

"I don't follow your reasoning," said Goldbeck. "The affair is wrapped in mystery. Suppose we look about outside? We may make some fresh discovery."

But no clue of importance was found, though it appeared that the thief had scaled a gate, reached the office roof by climbing over a shed, and then lowered himself through the skylight. Of the two watchmen, one had heard nothing, while the other had spent the night in the big warerooms containing the caged wild beasts. The matter rested there, for Hans Goldbeck decided not to put it into the hands of the police. But Tearle, whose curiosity was deeply roused, cherished a hope that some day the mystery would be cleared up.

"The Ashanti fetish was stolen for a purpose," he told himself. "It possessed some power—some secret—that was known to the thief, or was suspected by him. I wonder if the thing could have been hollow."

Three months have elapsed. In far distant Coomassie, under the fierce rays of the African sun, a couple of bronzed Englishmen were threading their way one afternoon through the mass of ebon humanity that well-nigh choked the market-place. The spacious enclosure, lined with booths and stalls, and opening into narrow streets of wattle huts, resounded with strange, harsh cries. Here and there, amid the ferocious-visaged Ashanti warriors, strutted a brace of Haussa soldiers or Gold Coast Constabulary—mute witnesses to the altered condition of affairs. For since the banishment of King Prempeh, and the installation of a British Resident, peace and honest government prevailed in Coomassie.

"You saw that chap who just passed us?" John Garthorn said to his companion. "He is a German, Adolph Becker by name. He used to trade in these parts, and it was rumoured that he dealt in black ivory. He disappeared some time ago, and last February—when I ran across him in Liverpool—he called himself Vanberg. Now he is back in his old haunts again."

"Vanberg?" exclaimed Luke Tearle, with a start of surprise. "What is he doing here?"

"I don't know," replied Garthorn. "His camp is in the neighbourhood, and he has a lot of Fantee niggers in his pay. Several times, before you arrived, I caught him lurking about my place. On the last occasion he dropped this. What do you make of it?"

Tearle examined with interest a fragment of coarse blue paper, 3ins. square, scrawled over with hieroglyphics that roughly suggested the inscription on an Egyptian obelisk.

"It is a native drawing," he said, "and looks to have been traced in blood. You are sure the man Becker lost it?"

"Well, I picked it up where he had been standing," Garthorn replied.

"May I keep it?"

"If you like—certainly."

Tearle was silent and thoughtful during the three-mile walk to the camp, which was north-west of Coomassie, in the cool shelter of the forest. An area of 400 square yards, lying between a sluggish stream of water and the rocky base of a hill, was surrounded by a high stockade with a gateway. On entering the enclosure one saw to the right the negroes' quarters, and on the left two wattle huts of better construction. In one of these the Englishmen slept, and the other was packed with the fruits of Garthorn's judicious bartering—ivory, gum-copal, monkey skins, rubber, and palm oil. In the rear were two stout cages, containing a rhinoceros and a pair of superb lions. In the middle of the space a clump of trees grew by a large boulder of peculiar shape.

The animals were Tearle's property. Having come up country a week previously, he had gladly consented to share quarters with his old chum Garthorn, the trader, who kept a permanent camp near Coomassie. At the present time, besides the Englishmen, there were only two negro servants here. Johnson, Tearle's white companion, was a dozen miles away, with a number of native assistants, constructing traps and pits for the capture of wild beasts.

When supper was over, and the night had fallen darkly, the negroes squatted by a fire of logs, near the open gateway. Garthorn lit his pipe, and presently began to shake with a chill.

"It's the confounded malaria again," he groaned.

He crept to his bed in the hut, and Tearle threw a blanket over him, and gave him a stiff dose of quinine. "That will knock out the fever, old man!" he said.

"Yes, I'll be all right in the morning," Garthorn assented.

Five minutes later Tearle was standing by the boulder in the middle of the camp, the mysterious bit of blue paper in one hand, and in the other a flaring wax vesta.

"There is certainly a resemblance," he said to himself. "It is a wild and improbable theory, and yet there is reason to think——"

A low, eager cry just then interrupted his thoughts, and glancing round he saw that the negroes were on their feet, in attitudes of alarm. He hurried towards them, and was half-way to the fire when six dusky figures swarmed through the gateway—five stalwart Fantees, headed by Adolf Becker. The German levelled his rifle.

"Hands up, my friend!" he commanded fiercely. "Quick! or I'll put a bullet through you."

Tearle, unarmed and helpless, was trapped like a rat. "You scoundrel!" he cried in a passion. "I know your game."

"So much the better—it saves explanation," Becker retorted.

"You are Vanberg the thief! It was you who stole the Ashanti fetish!"

The German laughed sneeringly. He had chosen his time well, and was master of the situation. Garthorn, crawling forth to see what was wrong, was promptly seized and tied at the wrists. Tearle was secured in a similar manner, and then both were thrust into the hut, from which all firearms were first removed. Two of the Fantees squatted outside the low doorway, and the other three stood guard over the trader's terrified negroes. Meanwhile the strong gate of the stockade had been closed and barred against possible intrusion.

Garthorn was burning with fever, and was almost indifferent to what had happened. Tearle's outburst of rage had cooled down a little, and he did not utterly despair of turning the tables on his wily foe. His shrewd mind revolved one thing and another, while he ventured an occasional peep at Becker, who was now digging with a spade at one corner of the boulder, with a burning torch stuck into the ground at his side.

"He shan't carry off the prize, if I can help it," Tearle muttered.

Five minutes slipped by. The German dug hard and fast, and the heap of excavated earth mounted steadily. An occasional roar, or a deep-throated grunt, told that the caged animals were unusually alert. Tearle smiled as he heard them, and suddenly he rolled over, close to his companion, and breathed a few whispered words of instruction. Garthorn turned, bringing his wrists where they were wanted by Tearle, who speedily bit through the thin strands of rope that confined them. A moment later his own arms were free.

"There you are," said Garthorn. "What are you going to do?"

"Can't stop to explain now," Tearle whispered. "I'm not fit to help you, old man!"

"I don't want you to, except by shoving those two chests against the doorway directly you hear me shout. And that's for your own safety."

"I'll do it."

"It must be sharp work. Hush! I'm off now."

In the side of the hut remote from the fire was a small window. Tearle climbed through it noiselessly, and dropping to his hands and knees, he crept across to the stockade. In the semi-darkness he gained the rear of the enclosure, and stood for a moment within a couple of feet of the imprisoned lions. He looked back to see the crouching groups of negroes—to see Becker digging away as if his very life depended on the task.

"It will be a costly sacrifice," he thought; "but it is the only chance of outwitting that scoundrel!"

There was a creaking, rattling noise as Tearle drew back the sliding door of the cage, and as quickly, with a lusty shout of warning, he darted behind the structure. The lions, who were uncommonly bad-tempered brutes, did not hesitate an instant. Seeing the way to freedom open, they bounded, with angry roars, down the enclosure.

The scene that followed was both ludicrous and tragic. Becker dropped his spade and climbed in hot haste to the summit of the boulder, from which dubious vantage he pulled himself to the limbs of a tree that was within reach. One of the lions stopped underneath, and the other plunged on. The negroes, captives and captors, scattered in terror. A couple of the Fantees flung away their firearms and scrambled like cats to the roof of the sleeping-hut. Two more, with the trader's two blacks, ran for the stockade. They gained the look-out platform, recklessly scaled the pointed piles, and vanished from sight.

The remaining Fantee, poor wretch! was too paralyzed with fright to imitate his comrades. The lion pounced upon him, seized him by the breast and throat, and with blood-curdling snarls worried him for a moment or two. The

agonizing screams of the man quickly ceased, and then, abandoning his dead or dying victim, the great beast slunk off into a dark corner of the enclosure.

Meanwhile, the other lion, having leapt vainly at the branches of the tree, sprang to the top of the boulder. He glared up hungrily, with fiery eyes. Becker was only a few feet overhead, and in a position of imminent peril.

"Help! help!" he cried hoarsely, appealing to the Fantees on the hut. "Slip down and get your guns—shoot the brute! Now is your chance! Do you hear, you cowardly dogs? Quick, or I'm a dead man!"

"That's what you deserve to be, you scoundrel!" Tearle shouted from the roof of the cage, where he had taken refuge. "All right, Garthorn?"

"Yes!" came the muffled response.

"Well, stay where you are, and keep the doorway blocked. I'll tell you what to do when the time is ripe."

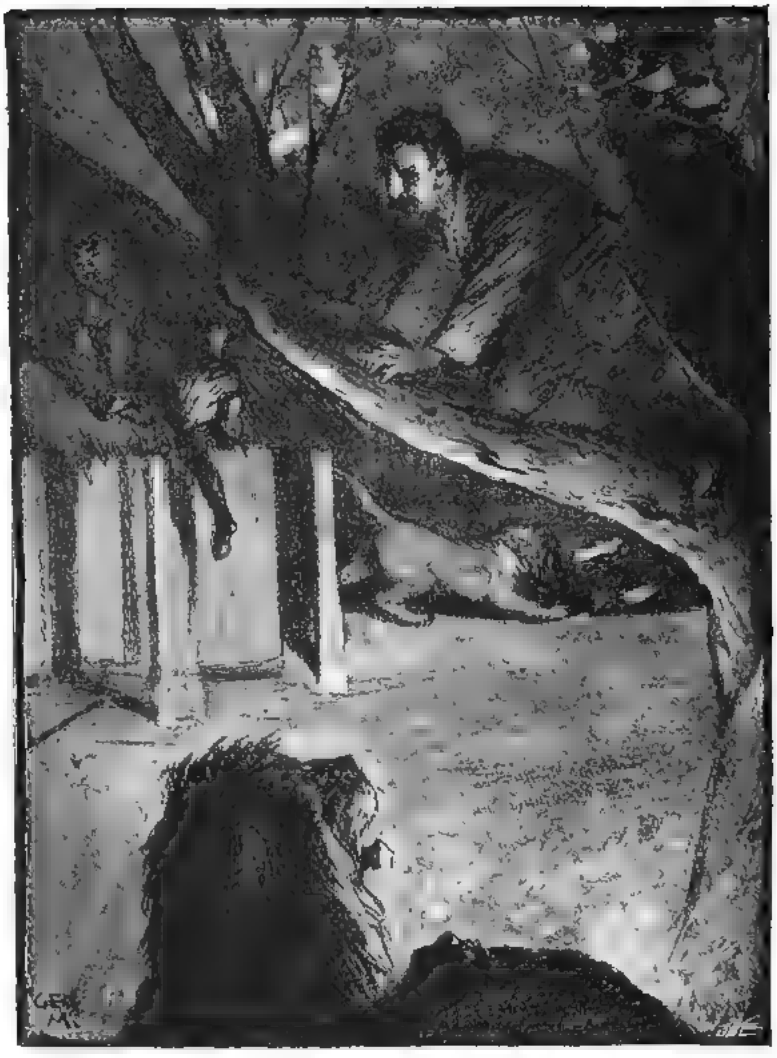
For two or three minutes the situation was unaltered. The roaring of the lions—the one was still invisible—echoed far through the forest. The Fantees jabbered and moaned, and Becker, despairing of any help from them, kept shouting at the savage animal crouching below him, in the hope of scaring it away, or preventing it from leaping into the tree. The bellowing and snorting of the rhinoceros, who was stamping excitedly about his cage, added to the din.

"Try to get the guns, Garthorn," Tearle called to him, during a brief interval of quiet. "A couple are lying just outside the door."

But the Fantees heard and understood the words, and one of them mustered up sufficient courage to drop to the ground and snatch a rifle. He aimed hurriedly but well at the lion on the boulder, and with the loud report the brute came to earth. A few convulsive struggles, and it lay motionless.

"It's time I was taking an active hand," Tearle concluded.

But just then something occurred to change his mind and keep him where he was. The rhinoceros, goaded to madness by the crack of the rifle and the smell of the powder, charged with the utmost fury against the end of his cage. He split the stout wooden bars, forced them apart, and squeezed his huge bulk through. At that instant Becker, rid of his dangerous enemy, had ventured to slide down the trunk of the tree. He saw the great horned beast galloping straight towards him, and with a yell of terror he fled, forgetting the immediate shelter of the boulder.



"HELP! HELP!" HE CRIED HOARSELY.

HE UNEARTHED A BULKY OBJECT, WRAPPED IN A LEOPARD SKIN.

Excepting this, the nearest place of refuge was the hut that contained the trader's goods. The German scrambled to the roof, and about four seconds later the rhinoceros went through the hut, from side to side, playing havoc with the contents, and leaving the structure a wreck. Becker was pitched to the ground, and as he rose the angry quadruped wheeled round and charged him, grunting viciously. The unfortunate man was knocked down, gored and trampled upon, and that his enemy did not turn again to finish him was due to the surviving lion, who suddenly appeared on the scene and attempted to creep by the rhinoceros. The latter made a rush, the lion met it with a spring, and at once the two animals were engaged in a furious combat.

This gave the two Fantees a chance to escape, and, unbarring the gate, they fled from the enclosure. Garthorn crept out of the hut and joined Tearle on the roof of the empty cage. From a distance they watched the thrilling fight, until it was brought to a close by the lion bolting through the gateway, with the rhinoceros in hot pursuit.

"There go a few hard-earned pounds," Tearle said bitterly. "But I don't altogether regret it; we have won a richer prize instead."

"What do you mean?" asked Garthorn.

"I'll show you presently. We had better take a look at that rascally German first."

Even as he spoke, without the slightest sound or warning, a dusky horde of men swarmed into the enclosure. They were Ashanti warriors, at least a score in number, and armed to the teeth. The band stole cautiously forward, peering right and left, and at length they caught sight of the excavation at the base of the big stone. They gathered round the spot, and while one of the Ashantis fanned the nearly consumed torch into a blaze, another wielded the spade vigorously. In three minutes he unearthed a bulky object, wrapped in a leopard skin, and when he held it up to view a storm of triumphant yells and cries rent the air. The Englishmen had been looking on curiously from their hiding-place.

"What have they got there?" whispered Garthorn.

"Without doubt," replied Tearle "it is the famous Golden Stool of Coomassie—the emblem of royalty, that has descended from king to king, and which the natives regard as sacred."

"I knew it had disappeared at the time of Prempeh's downfall," exclaimed Garthorn. "But how did it get here?"

"That is a long story," Tearle muttered savagely. "We're in hard luck to-night, old chap! We turned the tables on the German, and now these black scamps have outwitted us."

"I believe they are going without further search."

"So they are. Hush—not a sound! Discovery would mean a short shrift and no mercy!"

The danger passed. Several minutes later the enclosure was deserted, and the clamour of the retreating Ashantis had died away in the depths of the forest. There was nothing more to be feared, so Tearle and Garthorn left their shelter. The trader's damaged goods, the ruined hut, two valuable animals fled, one dead Fantee, and a dead lion—such was the dismal record of loss. This did not include Becker, who was suffering from severe bruises and a deep wound in his thigh. He was unconscious when found, but a dose of brandy revived him, and he was able to talk.

"I may as well make a clean breast of it," he said in a sullen voice, scowling at Tearle, "since you seem to know so much. It's a short story. For a year or two before the trouble broke I was a sort of adviser to King Prempeh, and I was pretty thick also with his favourite minister, Kalcalli. When the British troops came and captured the King, I thought it best to light out, and Kalcalli and I fled together. He had previously buried the golden stool by the King's command, and I had reason to believe that he had drawn a rude map of the spot, which he carried concealed in a gold fetish that he wore about his neck. I intended to rob him—I admit that—but, unluckily, Kalcalli lost the fetish, and the next day he was speared by a native of a hostile tribe. I escaped to the coast, and some time later I learned that the little idol had been found by a Haussa soldier. On coming to England I discovered by chance that it was in Hans Goldbeck's collection of curios. You know the rest. I stole the cursed thing and found the chart, which was tucked away in the hollow interior and cunningly plugged up. To locate the right spot was a more difficult task; but I succeeded in the end, though it took a lot of prowling about your camp. But for one of my own niggers, who must have blabbed the secret in Coomassie, I should have carried off the loot, and been rich for life. It's hard lines!"

"You don't deserve any sympathy, my man!" was Tearle's comment.

There is little more to relate. None of the raiding party of Ashantis were ever identified, in spite of the strenuous efforts of the Resident, and in what new place they concealed the King's golden stool—the prized and sacred emblem of Ashanti royalty—is unknown to this day, though the matter has recently been brought afresh to public attention.

Adolph Becker, *alias* Vanberg, ultimately recovered of his injuries, and succeeded in escaping one night from the trader's camp; he is supposed to be now in the interior of Africa. Tearle's trapping expedition turned out well, and, in due course, he landed a fine cargo of wild animals at the Wapping docks. He also brought with him the golden idol—he took it from Becker's pocket—and it occupies its old place in Hans Goldbeck's cabinet of curios.

OUTWARD BOUND FOR THE CAPE.

THE NATIONAL POST-CARD.

Written and Illustrated by
HAROLD MACFARLANE.

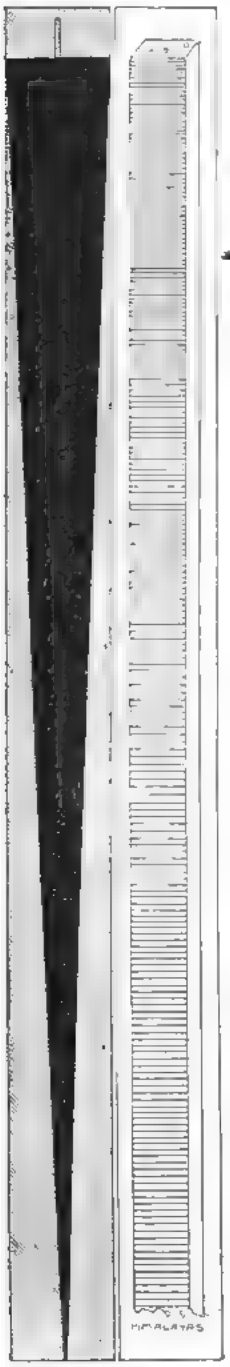


FIG. 1.

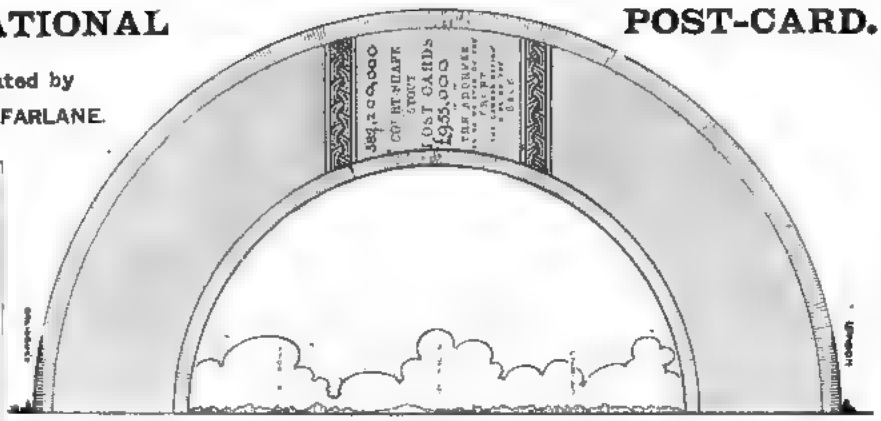


FIG. 2.

The same column of post-cards as in Fig. 1 would, arranged in the form of a semi-circle, reach from London to Salisbury.

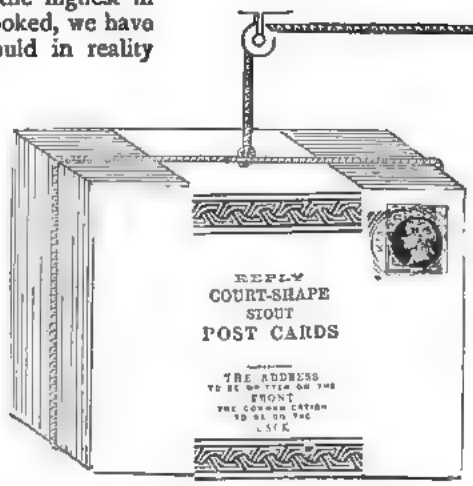
THAT the post-card is year by year increasing its hold upon our affections can be quickly gauged by noting the steady augmentation in its numbers during the last ten years, as set forth in the appendix to the Post-master General's last report; sufficient proof is, however, contained in the statement that, whereas we used 76,000,000 in the first year of their use, or about 2 1-3 cards a head, we now find that 382,200,000, or 9½ cards *per caput*, are necessary to satisfy our requirements to-day.

Nine and a half cards does not appear to be an extraordinary number for an inhabitant of the United Kingdom to receive in a year; but "small beginnings" have, in the case of a nation as large as ours, an extraordinary habit of finishing up with large endings; and, when we consider the amount of literature the authors of the national post-card write in order to fill up the pages of their popular annual, we get a very good idea of the magnitude of the same. Mr. Walter D. Wellman, a San Francisco book-keeper, some little time ago, copied on an ordinary post-card three columns of a newspaper, containing 7,068 words, using an ordinary steel pen and violet ink for the purpose. Although the writing was perfectly legible to the naked eye, we cannot take 7,000 words as the average length of messages conveyed by each of the numerous items that together form the national post-card; but, with that extraordinary effort before him, the reader can hardly accuse us of exaggeration if we take fifty words as being the average burden of the British post-card. Our statement, therefore, is as follows: If all the messages conveyed by post-card in the United Kingdom in one year were set up in type similar to that used in this magazine, we should, each year, have sufficient literary matter to fill 182,000 volumes, each the size of an ordinary 6s. novel, and these volumes, if placed side by side, would require a book-shelf long enough to extend from St. Martin's-le-Grand to the South Kensington Museum—a distance of about 3½ miles, as the message by wireless telegraphy flies.

In our first figure we give two comparisons in which the national post-card takes a more or less important part. To the right we show the cards piled in a single column that rears itself above the clouds to a distance of over 120 miles, and we compare its height (its width and depth have been vastly exaggerated for the purpose of making it visible) with that of the Himalayas (of which Mount Everest is 5½ miles high) which are drawn to the same scale. In

The column on the right represents the National Post-card compared with Mount Everest (5½ miles high); while on the left we see the same column (120 miles high) contrasted with a section of the Earth—the black wedge.

order that the mountain range—the highest in the world—should not be overlooked, we have labelled it with letters that would in reality be about three-quarters of a mile deep. Lest the national post-card should be too uplifted in its pride, to the left of the first-mentioned diagram we show it again, and this time we compare it with the Earth; the black wedge, representing a section of this sphere from the surface to the centre, being drawn to the same scale as the diminutive column 120 miles high, that projects from its surface.



As some of our readers may not be very familiar with the majestic peaks of the Himalayas we have, in Fig. 2, prior to breaking it up, transported the column to England, and, having placed one end on the steps of St. Paul's Cathedral, bent it over until it forms a beautiful half-circle, the other end resting in the neighbourhood of Salisbury. Although the size of the British p.c.—post-card, not police-constable—has lately been increased, let us hasten to confess it does not measure quite fifteen miles in length, as depicted in our diagram; we have again been guilty of exaggeration in respect to its girth, but as our object was but to give an idea of its tremendous height, perhaps we may rely on the reader's forgiveness.

No one knows better than the British householder who has calculated how many feet of oil cloth are required to cover a certain floor surface, how deceptive "length" and "width" are when they combine to form "area." The extraordinary faculty possessed by the Demon Area in making length and width look small was never more strikingly exemplified than in the case of the post-card. Taking our column, 120 miles in height, in one hand, we started upon the task of covering the major portion of Great Britain with a layer of post-card, with a light heart, though a heavy hand. Our surprise can therefore be understood when, having covered but a little more than the area of Hyde Park, St. James' Park, and Regent's Park, the supply of post-cards ran out. Although its area is somewhat disappointing, the national post-card, if suddenly dropped from the clouds upon the West-end, would cause no little consternation, as an examination of Fig. 3, in which we see the

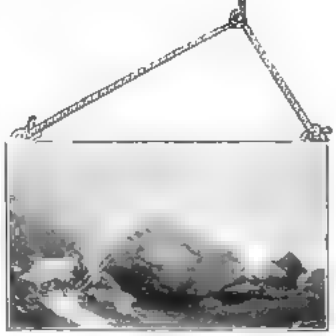


FIG. 4.

The National Post-card would require fourteen battalions of troops to balance it, each man weighing 20st.

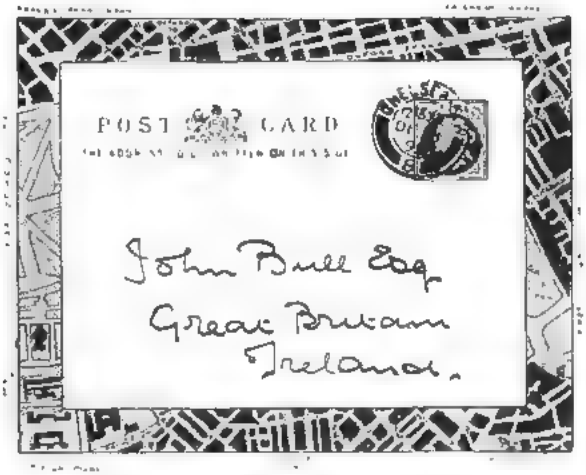


FIG. 3.

Placed in the form of an oblong, the National Post-card would cover the area represented above

post-card resting on the chimney-pots of Victoria, Paddington, South Kensington, and Park Lane, shows.

As we have no desire to deceive the public, perhaps we had better mention that, when we stated in the last paragraph that we took the 120-mile column of post-cards "in hand" we were speaking figuratively; indeed, we very much doubt whether such a burden would not be too great for us to cope with. The national post-card, although it does not weigh quite so much as that enormous detached piece of rock (30ft. high and 60ft. long), to be seen in Borrowdale, near Keswick, and known as the "Bowder Stone" (see Fig. 4), still its weight is such that if we did not possess the convenient counterweight depicted in our diagram the services of almost fourteen battalions of troops (13,664) would be required to balance it, and as each man would have to come up to a standard of weight of 20st. they might not easily be obtained.

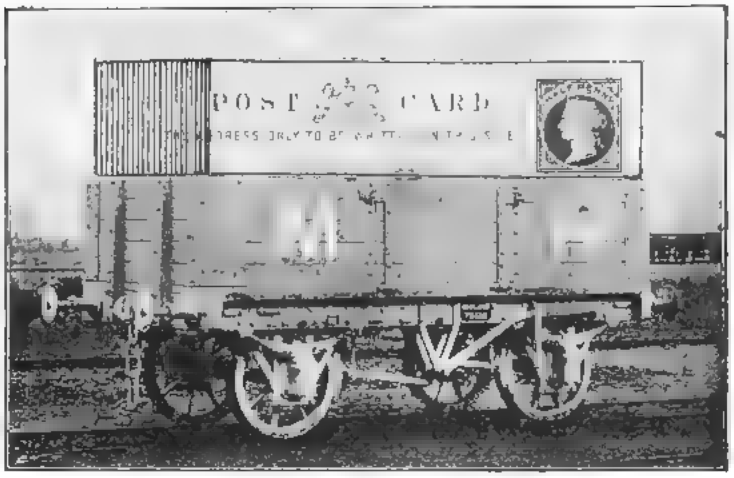


FIG. 5.

191 of the above trucks, the capacity of each being 7 tons, would be required to convey the National Post-card, thus forming a train ¾ of a mile long, to draw which, at a speed of 40 miles per hour, eight engines would be necessary.

Our post-card, which weighs over 1,330 tons, is not only heavy but bulky, and its removal from the northern frontier of India to England for the purpose of our second diagram would be a very serious undertaking. Should we elect to utilize the railway for the purpose, we should require a train consisting of 191 trucks, each carrying seven tons of post-card; such a train would be almost three-quarters of a mile long, and to permit of its rate of progression to be over forty miles an hour, eight engines would be required to pull it. By the courtesy of the Midland Railway Company we are, in Fig. 5, able to show one of the 191 trucks, laden with its burden of over 2,000,000 post-cards; this vehicle, technically known as a "high-sided" truck, weighs, with its freight, 12tons 2cwt.

The three hundred and eighty odd million items that together form the national post-card never fail to accomplish their task, however arduous it may be; indeed, were we to ask them to encircle the earth at the equator they would do so with 3,000 odd miles of post-card over.

In our sixth diagram the reader looks, from the

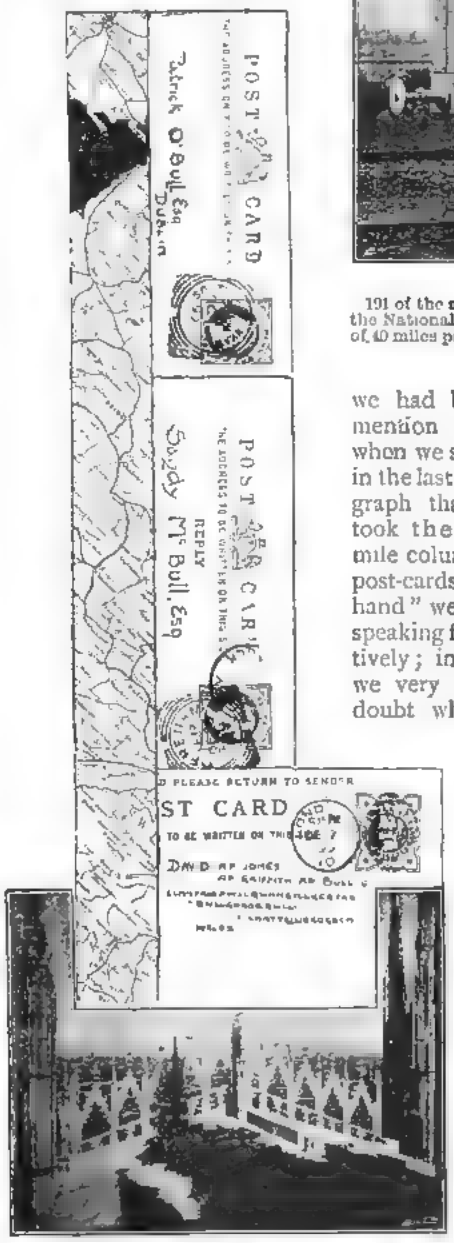


FIG. 6.

The National Post-card would form a pathway, 12ft. wide, stretching from Milan Cathedral to London, a distance of over 600 miles.

summit of Milan's famous marble cathedral, across the Alps, over Switzerland, France, and the English Channel, to London, and sees, stretching from his feet to the centre of his beloved capital a pathway of post-cards 600 miles long and made up of forty-five rows of post-cards, giving him a width of 13ft.

Apropos of post-cards and their journeys it is recorded that a certain member of the family despatched on a journey round the world accomplished his task in 183 days, having travelled at an average rate of 191 miles per day during that time—a speed that compares very favourably with that at which a post-card travelled from Italy in 1898. This post-card, addressed to a firm in Holloway Road, N., was posted on October 20th, 1898, and arrived at its destination in a somewhat peculiar manner on January 7th, 1899, the recipient reporting the matter in the following words:

> On unpacking a case of oranges from Spain, which had been purchased with many others by the buyer of our fruit department at the wharf, the card in question was discovered among a lot of other miscellaneous papers which had been used for the purpose of packing the said oranges securely.

Such a coincidence must be almost unparalleled in the history of the post-card; but the rate it travelled at is not, for a German post-card, addressed from Mettman, and dated November 14th, 1891, to a Sheffield firm, with an order for goods, took eight years to travel to its destination—the post-mark reading: "Sheffield, 8 P.M., Sept. 29th, '99."

The highest price ever paid for a post-card is said to be the sum of £10, which sum was paid in 1892 at a stamp exhibition, held at the Palais de l'Industrie in Paris. The post-card in question had pursued the individual, whose name and address it bore, round the world, and was at the finish of its journey decorated with seventy-two post marks. The ordinary post-card, we are thankful to say, is somewhat less expensive; in fact, we can purchase ten of him for one four-hundredth part of the cost of the record-breaker; but even at this low price he amounts in the aggregate to a large sum, namely, £955,500. If we took this sum in sovereigns, and, having obtained permission from the Mint authorities, melted them down into one nugget of gold, we should have a sufficient quantity of the precious metal to form 83,727 "post-metals," the exact size in every respect of the ordinary court-shaped post-card, but each worth £11 sterling. About one in every 39,000 ordinary cards is posted without any address, and about one in every 280 cards cannot be delivered because it is insufficiently addressed; we do not, however, think this proportion would hold good in respect to the "post metals," if they were put into circulation. In Fig. 7 we show how the 83,727 gold cards would compare in height with Nelson's column in Trafalgar Square, if they were placed one on top of another; the statue, it will be observed, has the advantage in height of about 37ft. Perhaps it is unnecessary to mention that the card in the diagram is somewhat exaggerated as regards width and depth—a "card" of gold the size of the one depicted would approximately cost £474,000. They would be scarce.

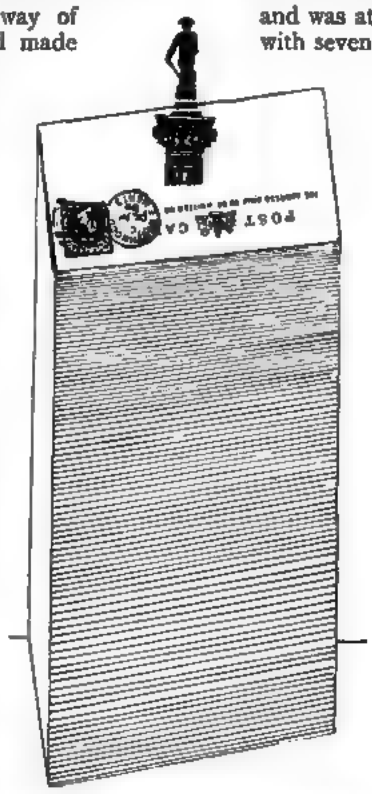
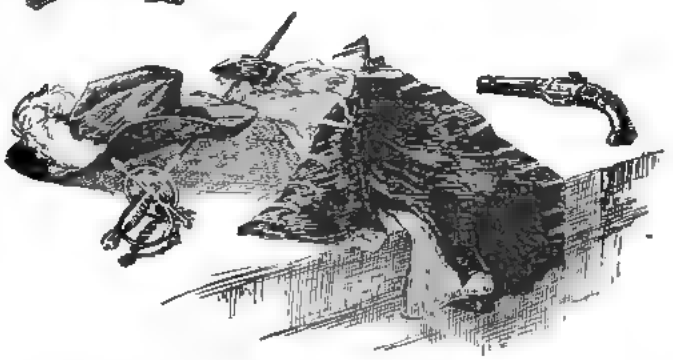


FIG. 7.

Here we see, compared with that of Nelson's Monument, the height of a column of golden post-cards equivalent in value to the cost of the National Post-card.

After Worcester Fight.



By FRED SWAINSON.

Author of "Acton's Feud," etc.

Illustrated by F. C. Luckhurst.

THE loyal Tylecotes had concealed His Majesty King Charles II. in the hiding place in the old disused gravel pit, commonly called the "Cage," not a moment too soon. Hardly had he and the faithful priest, Huddlestone, been safely installed than a body of Parliamentary horse swooped down upon the manor house on a hot scent. This king-hunting band consisted of a zealous Ironside captain, Aaron Martindale, a twanging, psalm-singing sergeant, Habbakuk, and twenty grim rank-and-file.

It had been arranged that the King should stay in the "Cage," which was amply provisioned, until young Mr. Evesham should arrive to conduct him towards the coast for France and safety. This would be in a day or so at the latest, and, provided the fugitives were prudent, they were as safe in the flanks of the gravel pit as if they had been at St. Germains.

Captain Martindale had quartered his men on the manor house, to the unspeakable disgust of old Sir Austen Tylecote and the furious anger of Ralph and Dick, his sons. Each day the Parliamentary captain beat the country and scoured the roads for miles round, shrewdly guessing that the royal bird was in the wood somewhere near, but bitterly disappointed that so far he had not seen a feather. On the third day Martindale had evidently heard some strong rumour of the King being in another quarter, and was thus in a hurry to get away, but could not forbear a final rail at the old Royalist. Therefore, he clattered out from the stable to the court-yard, followed by his men, and found the old knight and his sons moodily pacing up and down in the mild September sunshine. Martindale reined up before Sir Austen. "Like Herod of old," he said bitterly, "thou art an old fox, Austen Tylecote. Yea verily, I believe thou knowest where the son of that man of blood, Charles Stewart, lieth hid."

Sir Austen looked steadily into the captain's face. "And if I did, it were a poor guess to think that I should cry out such a high State secret for all to hear."

"That savoureth of treason," said Sergeant Habbakuk with a dark glance.

"Nay, friend, not against the ruler of these kingdoms."

"The Lieutenant General of the army peradventure might think otherwise," said Martindale. "But bethink thee, old man. The chosen instrument, Oliver Cromwell, will crush thee to the earth before the set of to-morrow's sun, if it be but whispered that thou harbourest the man Stewart."

"He and his shall be utterly rooted out and his name become a hissing and an abomination to the ears of the godly."

"Sergeant Habbakuk, thy words are of a sweet savour," said Martindale, with approval, "but this malignant hath ever followed that accursed house of Stewart, and hath given his gold and silver to that race of perdition, yea he hath not withheld even his limbs——"

"My arm," said the old knight quietly, "at Marston Moor, where Goring swept Fairfax off the field. I saw the backs of thy friends, sir soldier, on that glorious yet sorrowful day."

The Cavalier's joyful tone angered the Parliamentary captain, who was little accustomed to such hearty badinage. "Thou pratest of a crowning mercy to the arms of the godly Parliament, as though it were a victory of Rupert of the Rhine. Verily, it is hard to teach fools wisdom! But

bridle thy tongue, old man, when thou speakest to a captain who, though unworthy, hath yet girded on the sword of Gideon, or thou wilt run the risk of losing thy head as well as thy arm." To emphasise the menace he struck the old man in contemptuous disdain roughly on the shoulder with the flat of his sword.

The swords of the young Cavaliers flashed out like lightning at this brutal insult. Ralph's face was as white as a sheet, and Dick's brow flushed with overwhelming fury. The knight faced round hastily. "Ralph! Dick! Put up your swords. This is no time to throw away your lives, and this good Sergeant Habbakuk would pistol you now like mad dogs. At once!" he said angrily, as the young men hesitated to obey, and he gave his sons a meaning glance. Remembering their King, hidden a mile away across the park, the young Cavaliers sullenly dropped their swords; but not before Habbakuk had spurred up and threatened Ralph with his pistol.

From the knight's face every vestige of colour had faded; the wax-like pallor showed how deeply the insult had stung him. He looked steadily into Martindale's eyes. "Friend, consider, I am but a one-armed man, and could not even extend thy skill with that long tuck in thy hand. But 'tis a hard thing to feel a tattoo beaten on one's shoulders with another's sword—even when it is the sword of Gideon!"

Martindale made no answer to the knight's sarcasm, but, unabashed, spurred his horse roughly forward, with a savage, disappointed glance at the three Cavaliers. The troop moved smartly forward after their leader and swung out of the gateway. When the hoof-beats of the party died away in the distance, towards Oxford, the old Royalist's heart was lightened of a heavy load.

That night Charles and Huddlestone emerged from their hiding-place. Judging all safe, the Tylecotes had prepared an excellent supper for his Majesty and the priest in the cottage of a woodman, who, a week ago, had fallen at Worcester. It was judged advisable that Sir Austen had better keep to the manor house, for his absence might arouse suspicion if any of the household were traitors to the cause. Outside the cottage Ralph kept an anxious watch, whilst a merry party of King, priest, Lucy Tylecote, and Dick, snatched a hasty supper—for Mr. Evesham was expected at midnight—within. The King was sending out Dick with a glass of wine for Ralph, when Ralph himself came to the door: "Your Majesty, I hear a horseman galloping rapidly in this direction. By the gallop, and an occasional clank of harness, I judge the rider to be a redcoat, possibly one of the crew who left us this morning, returning. Your Majesty's safety, perhaps, depends on your getting away to the sand-pit at once."

"If there be only one——" said Charles, looking with regret and annoyance at the cheerful room, "Why should one scurvy knave——?"

"There may be more behind," said Ralph. "I pray your Majesty bethink you how much depends on your safety."

Huddlestone whispered a few words to Charles, who nodded like one unwillingly convinced.

"Lucy," said Ralph, "do you conduct his Majesty to the 'Cage,' and then hie home for dear life. Dick and I will stay here and see the horseman a little nearer."

Without more ado Charles gave a hand to Dick and Ralph, who dutifully dropped upon one knee to offer their loyal homage; and then he followed pretty Lucy Tylecote, who flitted through the woodman's garden into the fields and fled like a lapwing towards the "Cage."

An hour later, as the moon rose, Charles and Huddlestone were on their way south with young Mr. Evesham.

When the brothers were assured that the King was well away, Ralph said: "The rider, who ever he be, will have seen our light, so it is useless to put it out. Sit down there, Dick, and have your pistols ready. I'll step outside and wait upon events."

Ten minutes afterwards a man unceremoniously lifted the latch of the cottage and walked in. Dick instantly recognized the Ironside, Martindale. He was covered with mud, and from the disposition of it and the state of his dress it was obvious that he had been but just thrown from his horse. He started back in astonishment on seeing Dick, and made as though he would go out again. But Ralph, with his drawn sword, silently slipped out from the shadows of the bushes and entered behind him. Martindale faced round sharply on hearing the Cavalier's step in the doorway.

Feeling himself among enemies, the Ironside hastily clapped his hand to his long rapier, but Ralph said sharply, "All in good time, friend Roundhead. Keep thy hand off thy tuck for the present. Afterwards, perhaps, thou wilt need it. Shoot him, Dick, if he attempts to escape."

Martindale, seeing the great risk, did not make any further attempt to unsheathe, but drew himself up proudly, if sullenly, and looked at the two young men with high and menacing glances. "My horse hath thrown me, the sorry jade, but a bare mile below here, and hath turned her nose towards Oxford as though she had met devils on the road."

"The horse has been, haply, wiser than her master," said Ralph coldly, "but I hope—for it concerns a certain score 'twixt thee and me—that thou hast taken no hurt by the fall."

"No, none," said the Roundhead stiffly. The presence of the young Cavaliers in the woodman's cottage perplexed him, and the remains of the late so merry supper seemed to contain some puzzle. Cottagers did not sup on plump capon, dainty pies, and white bread, nor wash down such good fare with red wine out of crane-necked glass. And why should young esquires prowl about at that time of night with pistols loaded and bare swords? Evidently there had been a feast, and when Martindale saw the faint smile hovering over the young Cavaliers' lips answering his puzzled wonderment, he instantly guessed the truth. "Then the rumour was true after all! Had I but waited for Habbakuk and ten file!" he exclaimed in bitter self reproach. He fiercely took a step nearer the elder Tylecote. "That man Charles Stewart is here or near. Where there be wine and rich living a branch of that accursed tree is not far off."

"Gently, sirrah, gently!" said Ralph. "Use not a King's name thus lightly."

"Young men," said Martindale sternly, "think what you do if you hinder me in the work of the godly Parliament. It may be that you both will mount the scaffold, as the father of the young Stewart did. Where is he?"

"Martindale," said Ralph passing by the Ironside's peremptory question as though he had not heard it, "I am not to talk with thee of any matter save one. Why didst thou, safe in the middle of thy ten file, strike my father this morning—an old, a grey-headed, a one-armed man!"

"Whatever my hand hath done," said Martindale sourly, "my head will answer for it. Out of my way, lest a worse thing happen to thee and him."

The soldier took a stride forward towards the door; but Tylecote planted his rapier at Martindale's throat. "Sit down on that chair, sirrah! I will repay thee thy cowardly buffet to an old man."

The captain, with a smothered exclamation of rage, retreated before the steady point of the sword, and fell into the seat which Huddlestone

THE CAVALIER'S RAPIER DID ITS DEADLY WORK.

had just left. Ralph said: "Within the hour the moon will rise above the trees in the wood. There will then be light enough for our swords to do their work. But of us two, one shall not leave the garden gate alive!" Ralph was pale; his colour had almost entirely vanished, but grim resolution straightened every muscle of his face. The Ironside looked fixedly at the brothers for a moment. With a curious, exalted tone of prophecy, he murmured aloud: "The matter hath passed out of my hands. I did not seek the life of this young man, and it will not be laid to my charge." The Roundhead's anger had gone; he calmly took out from his pocket a Bible, and read with grim satisfaction certain gloomy passages in "Kings" and "Chronicles." The brothers admitted that Aaron Martindale was a *man*.

When the first glimpse of moonlight streamed into the cottage doorway, the soldier shut up his book and looked at Ralph. "Go first, Dick, and shoot if he attempt to run."

"I shall not run now," said Martindale quietly.

"In any case, Dick," whispered, Ralph, "don't let him go till morning."

Dick nodded approval, and the three filed out.

What Ralph called "the garden" was a corner of a small orchard, with good firm sward under foot and clear from the shadows of the apple trees. The moon now rode triumphantly in the velvety September sky, high and clear above the woods, her white light resting in floods of silvery brightness on the unthinned greenery of the trees. A murmurous whisper of faintly-stirred leaves, the tinkling of a brook hurrying through the undergrowth in the woods; the faint, distant bleat of some uneasy sheep, and all the slight, mysterious sounds of Nature from far and near, filled full the listening ear of night. A white owl was silently hawking on the dark edge of the trees, and moths flitted ceaselessly out of the whiteness of the moonshine into the dimness of the orchard. Neither Ralph nor Martindale perceived the loveliness of the night; but Dick never lost the memory of it whilst life lasted.

The Cavalier slipped off his coat and rolled up his shirt sleeves, whilst Martindale drew out his long rapier with savage satisfaction. Dick, a most unhappy soul, drew off a few yards, under the lee of the cottage.

The first few passes seemed to show that the skill of the two combatants was about equal; the Cavalier parrying with easy grace the solid and careful attack of his enemy, or pressing him to no result with a vigorous and sustained onset. Martindale had learned his sword-play in a good school. Almost continuously engaged in active warfare for half a dozen years, ever crossing swords with the fiery Cavaliers, he was as formidable an adversary as young Tylecote had ever encountered. His rapier did not leave the line for a moment. The clever and skilful lunges of the Cavalier were foiled with steady address, and not once nor twice, but many times, a deadly thrust slithered harmlessly along the Roundhead's blade. His defence seemed invulnerable. Tylecote, more than surprised at such a sound resistance offered by one whom he regarded as a mere hardy ruffian, put forth all his finesse to tempt the Roundhead to some unguarded thrust; but Martindale was far too wary to rise to the bait. He smiled in sour disdain as each trap opened before his eyes, and contented himself with making play, warily, but firmly, until he should discover the limits of Tylecote's skill. The Ironside surely felt his way until the strength of his steady attack and the cool inflexibility of his defence forced the drops of perspiration to the Cavalier's brow and made the sword hang heavy in his hand.

The suspicion now crossed his mind for the first time that he was going to lose, and, maddened by the thought to a paroxysm of anger, he put forth all his courage, strength, and skill into one desperate rally. It was met by an impenetrable defence. The swords crossed and re-crossed, glanced and glittered in the moonlight, like two running tongues of flame—the slither of steel gliding on steel sounded sharp and shrill as the hiss of angry snakes. In that furious encounter, Tylecote felt the iron strength of his opponent's arm—a strength he could neither break nor bend. As he disengaged to draw breath he felt that he was doomed. Martindale already knew it.

With the chilling weight of the issue weighing on his heart, the Cavalier's courage flickered for an instant, and his sword hung in momentary indecision. Instantaneously Martindale's weapon flashed out. Tylecote swerved in the nick of time, and the rapier passed harmlessly through the shirt sleeve. This escape steadied him. Feeling only too certain that he had been weighed and found wanting, and that now only a miracle could save him, he felt he risked little in attempting one last desperate ruse. This was the "pass of despair" of Savolio, the famous fencing master. It seemed to the Cavalier, in his desperation, of little importance that he who tried this desperate stroke was generally a dead man five minutes afterwards.

The Roundhead was now attacking with bitter fury. His sword seemed likely at any moment to find a sheath in the Cavalier's body. With all the coolness of which he was capable Ralph gave ground, but not so readily as to excite the Ironside's suspicions. Martindale followed hotly up, with the grim smile of triumph. Another fleering

THE BROTHERS BURIED HIM BEFORE DAY BROKE.

Cavalier for the long journey! Ralph, as though he were reeling from exhaustion, staggered backwards; the weight of his body rested on the heel of his boot, and his sword point dropped. The soldier lunged full at the Cavalier's throat. Tylecote swerved from the deadly thrust as marvellously as a swallow from a stone. The sword flashed over his shoulder. Then, gliding under his enemy's outstretched arm, the Cavalier's rapier did its deadly work. The Ironside plunged forward, spitted through and through on his opponent's sword.

Dick held the dying Roundhead in his arms. "Thanks, friend, thanks. As Abimilech fell even in the moment of victory before the gates——so——I———the good fight."

Five minutes afterwards he was dead.

The brothers buried him before day broke. The sand-pit hid the dead Ironside safe in its deep concealment, keeping the secret of the slain soldier as closely as it had held that of the living King.

Fred Swainson

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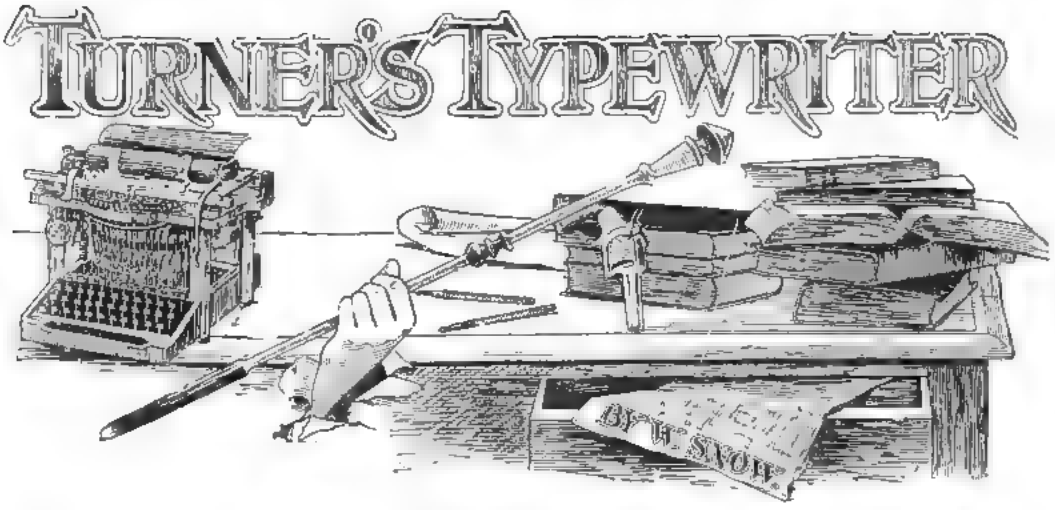
TURNER'S TYPEWRITER



Illustrated by Walker Hodgson and E. F. Skinner.

TURNER was one of the queerest kids you ever saw. His pater had lots of money, and shelled out no end. Turner wasn't a bad fellow himself either, and, what with his money and tuck, he had as good a time as any of the juniors at Greyshot. He used to bring the rummiest things back after the holidays; things, he said, which were lying about at home and weren't wanted. One term he set up half the chaps in the form with fountain pens, which drove Denning (that's our form-master) nearly mad; for he couldn't bear to see fellows with ink on their fingers, and you know what fountain pens are, even the best sort! At last he bagged the lot, and kept them till the end of the term, and made Turner promise not to bring them again. Another time, he brought a fret-working machine, and two revolvers. Nobody cared when he had the fret-working machine taken away for using it in "prep."—it made such a beastly row; but it was a shame about the revolvers. You see, Turner and I (we are great pals) were going to have an awfully good time shooting sparrows in the Bayfield woods; but the Matron found them in his bed-room drawers, between two waistcoats, and took them to the Head, and there was a row. The Head said they were "lethal weapons," and that it was a mercy they had been discovered; but when I wanted him to whack me as well as Turner, because I was going to use them as much as he was, he smiled, and told me that one narrow escape ought to be enough for me. I don't see what he meant, for it's all rot about firearms being dangerous when you know how to use them. And besides, how are we going to fight the French when they invade us, as Sanderson (that's one of our fellows) says they're sure to do, if we don't practise, so as to be good shots? But that isn't what I was going to tell you about.

After the revolver business Turner lay low for a bit, and was more like other chaps; but the next term, the moment I saw him, I knew there was something up. And I hadn't long to wait. He carried me off to our study directly we had done tea, and showed me a sort of box in the corner.

"There," he said; "what do you think that is?"

"Is it another fret-work machine? If it is, I'll smack——"

"Smack your granny! Try again."

"I know, a sewing machine!" (Turner is quite capable of having one, so as to put the buttons on his shirt himself).

"Rot! I'm not a girl."

"Well, tell us, Turny, that's a good chap!"

"All right, then. Here goes!"

He unlocked the box, and took out a thing all keys and bars and levers.

"Golly!" I said. "Is it an internal machine?"

"*Infernal*, you ass!" said Turner—he's awfully particular about words sometimes—"No, it isn't; it's a typewriter."

"What's that?" I asked.

"Oh! it's a thing you write with—no, print,

instead of writing. You do it much quicker, and it's easier to read. Your clerk can save you £5 a day by using it. My pater has seventeen in the office, and this one wasn't being used, so I just bagged it. Look here."

He shoved in a piece of paper and began. This is what he wrote :—

"dEaRden isa bIg AsS."

"It doesn't do it very well," I said, after I'd smacked his head.

"Oh! that's my fault," he said; "I haven't had time to learn it properly yet. But, you bet, in a day or two, I'll do it all right."

"But what good is it to you?" I asked. "It won't save *you* any money."

"It'll save me time, and time's money. I'm going to do my letters and exercises and impots on it, and I'll let you use it if you're decent. But, come on; let's go and see how much chink the new kids have."

That night all the juniors in the house were in our study, looking at the typewriter, and Turner might have made any amount if he'd liked to take money for letting the fellows use it. But he isn't that sort; and the old thing would have been jolly well worn out, if Turner hadn't fought Jones and Digby-Smith to make them give it up.

The next day was Sunday, and Turner and I practised nearly all day, and got on pretty well. Some of the letters were rather worn, but that did not matter; and of course we made lots of mistakes. But anyhow, the stuff we typed was much easier to read than our ordinary writing. Turner said he would just wait till he was perfect, and then do all his work on it. He said he expected that in a year or two every boy in England would do his work on a typewriter, and that he was the "pioneer," or some such rot. I bet him my new three-bladed knife against his cricket-ball that Denning wouldn't take an impot, let alone an exercise, if it was typewritten—and lost the bet, too, as I'm going to tell you.

Well, when he could type a page without making more than about two mistakes a line, he told me that the time had come, and he set himself to worry Denning in school all he could, so as to get a good long impot to start on. But he didn't score much that time, for Denning gave him ten pages of Homer to write out, accents and all, and that was no good, because Homer hadn't a typewriter, and couldn't have used it if he had, as he was blind. However, Turner did his Homer, and said he'd been a fool to try it on in Greek lesson, but he'd know better next time. So he didn't learn his History, making sure that Denning would give it him to write, as he generally does. But Denning was in a beastly temper that morning and just kept him in till he knew it. Turner said it was useless trying to do anything with such a discouraging brute as Denning, and tried to get an impot from Sykes, the mathematical master. So he poured a bottle of ink over my book in Algebra, and got ten quadratic equations to do, which was as bad as ever, for nobody could write x^2 on a typewriter. I wanted him to type the rest, and put in the little figures at the top with a pen; but he said he was going to do it properly when he did start. At last he got what he wanted, 200 lines of Virgil for shying bread at dinner, and wasn't he cocky! I pointed out that there are no "w's" in Latin, and that he would be wasting a machine that had a "w" in it, if he used it for Virgil; but there was no stopping him.

"What a lark!" he said, as he got the machine out. "I'll do the whole lot in half an hour, and it would have taken me an hour and a half to write."

But he was so awfully conscientious about that impot, and started again so often, because he had made a mistake, that it took him the best part of two half-holidays to get it finished. However, he got it done at last, and then the fun began.

"What on earth's this?" said Denning, when Turner gave up the lines.

"My impot—my imposition, sir," said Turner, as cool as a cucumber.

"Your imposition!"

"Yes, sir."

"I told you to write out 200 lines of Virgil, didn't I?"

"No, sir. You said nothing about writing, sir. You said: 'Take 200 lines,' sir."

Denning smiled (he isn't such a bad fellow at bottom), and began in his sarcastic style :—

"Civilization is indeed progressing, when her latest expedients find a votary in Turner," and we all thought that Turner had scored. However, he went on :—

"For the future, Turner, all impositions and exercises must be written—with a *pen*, understand that."

Turner just said, "Yes, sir," and it looked as though that was the end of it, but it wasn't.

That day, just after tea, Turner and I were starting out for cricket, when Denning came out of his room and called us.

"Bring me that typewriter, Turner, I should like to look at it."

Of course Turner was awfully cocky at being asked to show the thing, and went off for it like a shot. Denning didn't ask me in, so, after I'd waited about twenty minutes, I went off to the field. Turner was in our study when I came back, but he seemed rather shirty about something and

HE TOOK THE POKER AND SMASHED THE TYPEWRITER INTO BITS.

wouldn't speak for a long time; but at last I got it out of him that Denning had praised the typewriter no end, and had made Turner stay and type out for him all his marks for the week, and his Scripture notes for next day, and part of an article he was doing for a magazine.

"Of course, it's awfully good of him," said Turner, "and he wouldn't have *anybody* in his room all that time."

Next day he had to type ten more pages of the article and six letters, which Denning dictated while he sat swilling his tea. And so it went on. Turner had to work that old machine about three hours a day, while Denning got fatter and fatter, through having no work to do. Turner soon left off pretending he liked it; but what could he do?

At last he couldn't stand it any longer, he said, and just took the poker and smashed the typewriter to bits, and when Denning told him to come to his study after dinner and type the lists for him, he told him it was broken.

"Broken!" said Denning; "but it was all right yesterday."

"Yes, sir," said Turner; "but it's broken now."

"What a pity," said Denning; "but it doesn't matter. I liked your typewriter so much that I've got one of my own coming to-morrow; so we'll be able to go on as usual."

I thought Turner would have burst out crying, though he's a plucky kid enough; but Denning took pity on him, and said that perhaps it wouldn't be safe to trust him with a new machine.

The same night, as we were coming out of Chapel, I heard Denning telling Sykes that he thought he'd cured "Turner's insatiable passion for novelty," and now the very worst threat he can use is to tell Turner that if his writing doesn't improve, he will make him type his exercises.

That's the worst of Denning. You never know when you have him.

FIG. 1.

SOME OPTICAL ILLUSIONS.

By Walter Dexter.

THAT seeing is *not* believing we will endeavour to show you by means of a few of the many optical illusions which are to be found around us every day. The eye, that most wonderful portion of our anatomy, though at the majority of times most exact, is yet ever leading us astray, and causing us to believe the things which are not. There is, perhaps, nothing more deceptive than a straight line. Look at Fig. 1. Here we have a vertical and a

FIG. 3.

horizontal line, both of the same length. "No, surely not!" you will say. "A B is certainly longer than C D." You are deceived; just measure them. The same it is with our next illustration—A C and C B are equal, yet A C, being divided into many smaller parts, appears to the eye to be the longer. We have several more instances of deception in straight lines. Take Figs. 3 and 4, for example. A B is in each case the same length, yet in Fig. 3 the two long lines above and below it dwarf our line A B,

FIG. 4.

and make it appear much shorter than in Fig. 4, where it is bounded by two lines much shorter than itself.

A very similar illusion to this is shown by Figs. 5 and 6, where again A B in each case are equal; but whereas in the former the arrowheads are stretching out the line and making it appear longer, yet where the arrowheads are compressing the line in Fig. 6 it makes it appear shorter.

A thin man always appears to be much taller than a stout man, and in Figs. 9 and 10 we have an illustration of this, but in reality the thin man

FIG. 2.

FIG. 5.

is only as tall as the fat man, as you will see if you measure them both. The same it is with a thick and a thin line, as shown by Figs. 7 and 8, both of which are the same length.

We will leave straight lines for the present to examine Fig. 11, which, like the thin man, appears to be longer, because it is more elongated, than it is broad; but it is made in

FIG. 6.

an exact square. If the drawing be turned round—that is, with the four points to the right and left—it still has the same appearance of being broader than it is high.

Euclid tells us that parallel lines, if prolonged in any direction, will never meet. The three parallel lines in Fig. 12 appear to be going in the right direction to directly contradict this universally accepted statement. But they are parallel, as a ruler will prove. The cross lines, being at directly opposite angles, are the sole cause of this further optical illusion with reference to straight lines. Each one of these cross bars furnishes us with a further illusion, which is enlarged upon in Fig. 13. The block A does not appear to be continued in B; yet it is, for the line *a b* is a perfectly straight one. Our eye is turned, as it were, by the block in the centre. Fig. 14 gives us another example of this. Here is a block with a line (A B)

FIG. 7.

FIG. 8.

passing through it. A B appears to be a straight line, but it is not, as can be proved by passing a ruler along it, when the straight line will be found to be A *b*.

I suppose many of you know what an ærometer is; you will very often see one on top of a flagstaff, consisting of four cups which revolve with the wind. If you gaze steadily at them for a few moments they will appear to turn and revolve in the opposite direction. This is a very remarkable illusion, and should be tried by all who read this article. In Fig. 15 is an example very similar to the illusion mentioned above. Here are four rings which, if looked at steadily for a few moments, will appear as if they have changed, and turned inside out.

FIG. 9.

No doubt many of you have seen Fig. 16 before, but it is worth repeating here. No. 1 is a strip of paper tinted from black down to white. When placed at a distance of about 3yds. it will be seen that, although the longer sides of the strip are quite parallel, they seem to be converging towards the top. If, however, you place the same strip of tinted paper at the same distance from you on a sheet of paper tinted dark at top and light at bottom, as in Fig. 2, the strip will resume its shape, that of a perfect rectangle.

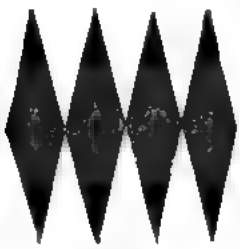


FIG. 11.

Fig. 17 is not the only optical illusion which has been used for advertising purposes. The

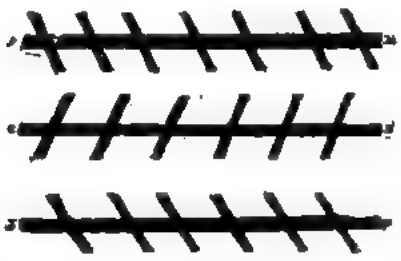


FIG. 12.

question asked is, "Which is the larger of the two pictures?" Cut them out, and you will be surprised. Messrs. Pears, of soap fame, have used the rings in Fig. 18 with great success for advertising. If you revolve this magazine in your hand, the two big rings will revolve also, and the truck and its occupants will be made to appear as if moving at an alarming rate of speed. An excellent optical illusion picture, but which owing to lack of space I am unable to illustrate, was drawn by an Italian artist to represent two different subjects—one, two children playing with a puppy; the other a death's head, which will appear if you hold the picture a yard or so from you, or view it in a dull light.

FIG. 10.

Another is not an ordinary optical illusion, it rather goes to prove how an object is imprinted on the eye. Look at the black spot in the

FIG. 13.

FIG. 14.

centre of a circle until your eyes are rather tired; then look to the ceiling, and after a second or two you will see the black figure on

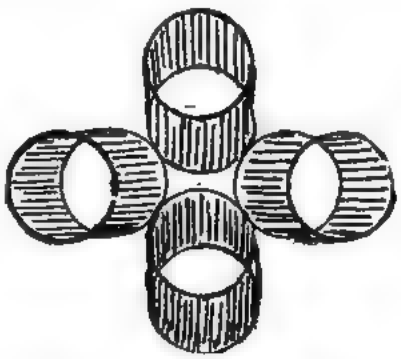


FIG. 15.

a white ground. This is certainly an extraordinary optical illusion, since you see on the ceiling an object which is not there

When you are reading, are you aware that you only read the top half of the printing? In the letter S, for instance, you would

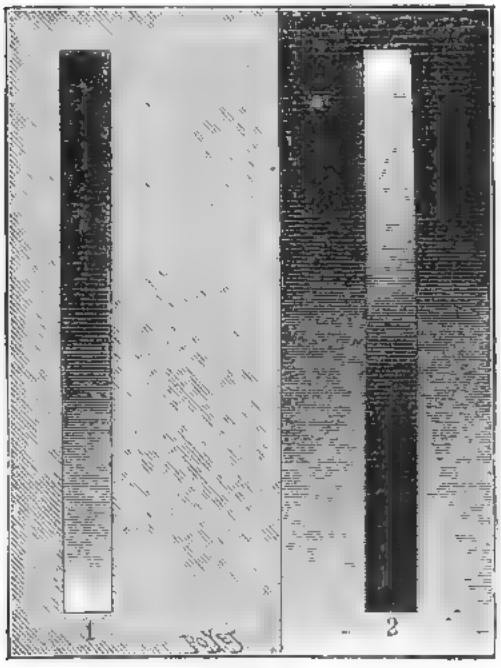


FIG. 16.

generally say that the top half was as large as the bottom half of the letter. But turn it upside down and you will see that you have always been mistaken.

An old trick to prove how deceptive is the size of anything is to show somebody a silk or "top hat," and ask him to indicate on the

FIG. 17.

wooden skirting round the room the height to which the hat would reach if placed on the floor. The person asked generally puts his finger from 12ins. to 18ins. above the floor, and is greatly surprised to find how far he is out in his reckoning, for a silk hat is very rarely any higher than 6½ins!

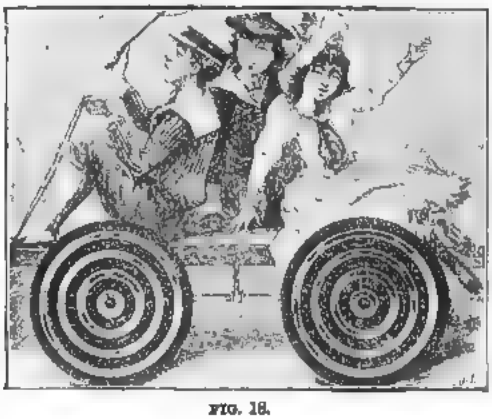
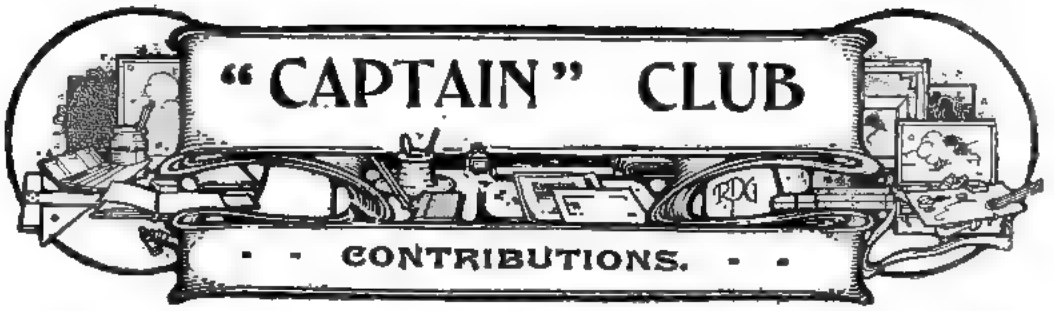


FIG. 18.

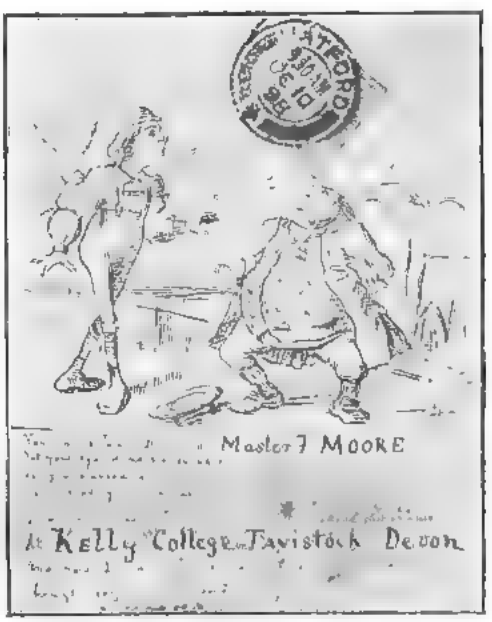


THE prize of a year's subscription to THE CAPTAIN is awarded to D. MCEWAN, 1, Grey Street, Shettleston, N.B., for his two sketches—"The Clown," and "The Comic Juggler."

A Visit to a Convict Prison.

My father being a visiting chaplain at Peterhead Convict Prison, he got permission one day to take me over it. The prison is surrounded by a large stone wall, from 15ft. to 30ft. high. It is entered by a large door, situated where the wall is highest. We were admitted by the gate warder, and I found myself facing the cell buildings in the prison yard. Before entering the yard however, there was a huge iron gate to be opened. When this was done we went straight to the cells. As it was working-time, all the convicts (except those who were sick and confined to their cells or the hospital) were out. At the top of the door of each cell there is a narrow piece of glass, to enable the warders to take a passing glance inside. The convict inside cannot see anything but the warder's eyes; but the warder can not only see the convict but the whole of his cell! The cells have each a bed and a washing-stand. All the cells are exactly the same, except two. These are known as the "padded" and "silent" cells. The padded cell, as its name suggests, is completely padded over. It is reserved for the use of any convict who goes mad. The silent cell is a dismal place, and pitch dark when the door is shut. Shout as you like, nobody on the other side of the door would hear you! The bed is simply a board cemented into the floor, upon which the convict puts his blankets. This cell is only used as a punishment. There is also a hospital and a chapel in the buildings. Going round to the back of the yard, there is a row of sheds. Each of these sheds is a "shop." There is the carpenter's shop, the blacksmith's shop, the tailor's shop, etc. All the "carpenters," "blacksmiths," and "tailors" are convicts, and "good-conduct" men. Of course, they are strictly watched over by warders with loaded rifles. The other convicts work at the quarries near the prison. I was very sorry when our visit came to an end, and the large gate was shut behind us.

GILDART J. WALKER.



Fac-simile of an envelope sent to Mr. Frank Moore. The address, as you see, is printed in larger letters, which still form part of the well-known rhyme.

Sent by Frank Moore.

I Say——

Q.—How do we know there is no insanity among the Arabs?

A.—Because, so our geography tells us, there are *no-mad* tribes among them.

Perpetrated by
A. L. SNOW.

In a Coffin.

The following is an extract from a letter which I received from an uncle who is an officer on board the ss. *Coptic*, plying between America and Japan. I think it might be of interest to your readers, so I send it:—"We have several empty Chinese coffins aboard, as whenever a Chinaman is not

THE CLOWN.
Drawn by D. McEwan.

expected to live long, he ships for China (if he is not in China), hoping to reach home before he dies. The coffins are there, presumably in case of the owners' decease on board. We keep these coffins aft near their quarters, and it appears that there were some of these Chinese passengers playing cards alongside these supposed empty coffins, when all of a sudden up goes the lid of one of the coffins! The Chinese fled all over the ship in abject terror, thinking the devil was after them, and were barely pacified even when, upon inquiry, the cause of their fright was discovered to be a Japanese stowaway. You cannot imagine the spectacle of these terrified Chinamen, running pell-mell about the ship with, as they thought, the devil at their backs."

ONE OF THE CLUB.

The Horse.

[Extract from anencyclopædia of the future. Date about A.D. 2000.]

The horse was an animal much used by the ancients. Its form was considered very handsome, and varied much in height and colour; the smaller breeds were called "ponies," and were much beloved by the boys of all periods.

The head was placed at the extremity of a long thin neck, the ears were pointed and upright. The leg terminated in a horny substance (capable of giving a kick if teased) termed a "hoof," usually shod with a semi-circular piece of iron. The colours of the beast were chiefly black, white, brown, or a peculiar shade then known as "roan." The ancients used this creature principally as a beast of burden. They rode on its back or in their different kinds of chariots. Some kinds were used only for hunting and racing, amusements which were then very popular, but which have long since gone out of fashion. The horse was guided by a complicated combination of leather thongs, with a steel bar fastened in its mouth. This animal is now totally extinct, but a good stuffed specimen may be viewed in the South Kensington Museum (a very ancient edifice).

The reason of the horse's rapid extermination may be attributed to that now obsolete locomotive called the "motor-car."

W. L. L.

Another Howler.

A schoolboy was asked what he knew about hydrogen. He gave a fairly correct answer, but added the strange remark that it was not to be found in the Orange Free State. The perplexed examiner, feeling sure that the boy must have had some foundation for so curious an assertion, looked up the textbook which he knew the boy had been using, and discovered its origin in the statement that "hydrogen is never found in a free state."

[Gentleman didn't sign his name.—ED.]

THE COMIC JUGGLER. *By D. McEwan.*

A Little Glory.

There could be no doubt that the face peering at me belonged to a Zulu, and a remarkably ugly one, too. It stood its ground, even when my eyes were fixed upon it, and did not duck behind the shrubs as—so I am given to understand—black gentry, called Zulus, are in the habit of doing.

I never for a moment doubted that I should be killed, and I vaguely wondered in what manner they would despatch me. The thought that even at that moment, perhaps, a Zulu was standing behind me, with his assegai poised ready for hurling, made me feel a trifle uncomfortable, but suddenly twisting my head around, I assured myself there was no one there.

I cannot say I was charmed with my position, nor was it as impregnable as—well, as Gibraltar, for instance. A kind of valley, bordered on either side by a forest of dense bushes, formed our primitive entrenchments. The fair, or rather the hideous, unknown, had pitched his tent on one side of the Jordan, as I may term the glade, and I was on the other. Thus we waited.

The Zulu still displayed an interest which did him credit in myself, and gave no signs of assault with intent to kill, to my great relief.

By-and-by I became tired of watching the Zulu's face in such an uncomfortable posture as kneeling invariably is, so I resolved to strike up a profitable acquaintance with him. With this end in view, I began to move cautiously through the bushes, but, being a novice in the art, I snapped a stick in two. The fair—I mean the hideous—unknown also heard it, and ducked behind the bushes.

Then an awful thought came into my mind. I would shoot, actually shoot, the Zulu, and purchase everlasting glory and never-fading renown in that manner. Yes, I would, and in this state of mind I waited for his reappearance.

He rose above the bushes. I cautiously raised my gun to my shoulder and fired. Result: No. 1, deafening report; No. 2, six of my teeth knocked out; No. 3, horrible groans from the Zulu; No. 4, rushed across the Jordan and found—I blush as I write—a coal-black sheep in its last agonies.

D. R. Lock.

THE ROOK: "Hullo, youngster! How's things?"
THE ROBIN: "Not very O.K., sir. In fact, I'm a little dicky."
By J. D. Hughes.

"Oi planted some taters 'ere t'other doy, and what do yer think cum hup?"
"Potatoes, of course."
"Nar! There cum hup a drove o' pigs an' ate 'em hup."
By Fred. Thompson.

Experiences of the Captain of a Private School Football Team.

(That is to say, NOT a good one.)

You change, and come out on the field with much side. You go up to the captain of the other XI., wondering where you would be if he charged you, and stammer out a question as to whether he will toss up, or any other question concerning the game. Perhaps you win the toss. You arrange with your forwards in a matter-of-fact way to kick off. You do. As soon as your inside man touches the ball you feel a rush and a whirling mass of something which leaves you dazed and blinking, and when you look round you see the enemy's forwards charging with dreadful velocity towards your goal. Thank goodness! your back has not lost his head, and with frightful audacity and great presence of mind puts himself before the goal. In trying to stem the on-coming rush he sends the ball a few inches behind the flood of forwards which is advancing upon him. Instantly our centre-half, who, thank goodness! has kept cool through all the charge, hooks it up and passes to the centre-forward—at which station you have posted yourself—and you realize for the first time how great a responsibility is on your shoulders. You stretch out your foot to take the pass, but before it touches your boot, again there is a rush, as though you were standing on the platform of a station as an express was passing through. You look round and begin blaming the man of your side nearest to you for not charging

the other side's man; but long before you have come to the end of your vocabulary you hear a mighty shout ascend, and you realize, as the triumphant forwards of the enemy come marching back from the scene of their success, that the score stands at one goal to *nil* in favour of the enemy. This goes on until "time," when you retire from the field feeling how very small and weak your eleven is, and thinking of what you *might have done* and what you *did*. Of course, if you have a crack school team under you, you will not condescend to look at this, but if you are not *quite* perfect, you may sympathise with the writer's sensations.

C. K. B.

What I Can See from Our Windows.

By looking out of the back windows we can see Greenwich Observatory and the ships on the river. Then by coming to the front of the house I see (working from right to left) first, the Tower of London, the Tower Bridge, and the Monument. Right behind that we can distinguish the Alexandra Palace and Highgate Hills and church (this only on clear days).

Further to the left we can see St. Paul's, the Houses of Parliament, and Big Ben. Straight in front of us we see the Big Wheel and Denmark Hill.

Now last, but not least, the Crystal Palace and the fireworks every Thursday and Saturday.

CYRIL J. LUND.

[P.S.—Just opposite us is a small park in which a band plays every Thursday.]

Our Gymnasium.

And How We Fitted It Out.

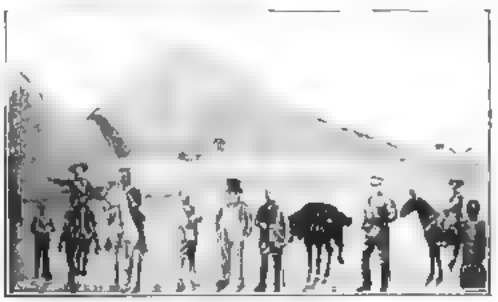
Having an out-house, for which my parents could find no particular use, I and a cousin, who lives with us, decided to turn it into a "gym." Neither of us being overladen with cash we could not purchase the necessary apparatus, so we had to be content with home-made articles, which, however, serve their purpose quite as well. I will explain how we managed it. Procuring two posts of wood, 7ft. long, we fastened them to the floor by means of screws; these posts stood upright and were 3ft. apart. At a distance of 9ft. we fastened other two posts, 15ft. long. To the top of these posts, by means of brackets, we fastened a short length of ladder. This ended the making of a hand-ladder, and we next started to make our vaulting horse. From a grocer we bought an old apple barrel, and, after stuffing it as tight as possible with sawdust, we nailed on the top. This barrel we fastened to four short uprights in the floor, and, when covered with baize, made a splendid "horse." The steed finished, we next fastened up four posts 2½ft. high, and so placed that the first two were 2½ft. apart, and a distance of 5ft. from the second two. These were joined by posts 5ft. long. With the addition of hand-rings and a trapeze our work came to an end, and, on the whole, the result was surprising.

J. S. PATERSON.

"*CAPTAIN*" *CLUB CRITICISMS.*

AUTHORS AND ARTISTS.

V. Wakefield.—Unless you can give me a satisfactory reason for sending in a poem copied out of another paper, I cannot allow anything else of yours to appear in THE CAPTAIN. Were you under the impression that copied matter was eligible? Just write me an honest letter and explain. **Littérateur.**—You have an idea of writing, but your work is as yet very amateurish. Your boys' speeches are too long, and the tale before me is wildly improbable. The boys who "cured" the "cad" ought to have been thrashed for playing tricks with such a dangerous force as electricity. Keep your tales shorter, and mind your spelling. You'll need a great deal of practice before you are worthy of print. Nothing like trying, however; endeavour to be as original as possible. **Fred Mansfield.**—Most of the above remarks apply to you. You have ability, and your dialogue is chirpy and readable. Try to get hold of a better plot; the end of your tale is very weak. **Dorinda.**—Your verses show distinct promise. Send in some more short poems. Don't write so much about "Life" and "Death." Keep copies of poems sent. **John A. Patten.**—There is a fine, unselfish ring about your "Danger Ahead!" which likes me well. May you live long and prosper apace! **H.E.S.**—Wait half a dozen years, and then see what sort of poetry you can write. **Iris.**—A little more care and pruning might have made "A Lay of the Pit" printable. As it is, it stumbles instead of trips along. Try again, and remember that writing verses costs endless pains. Don't think that they can be "dashed off." Tennyson once smoked six pipes over one short line. **Golliwog & Co.**—Apply formally for membership, stating that you are now taking in THE CAPTAIN regularly yourself. A post-card will do. **H. E. Woolley.**—Tell us "how to make" something a little simpler than an optical lantern. **H. B. Parker.**—Before you get a story into print you must suffer many disappointments. For instance, I



A PLEASING FORECAST.
By Gordon Barnsley.

cannot use "A Snow Sedan." It is a good idea, but if I were to accept it I should have to rewrite it—and Life is short! Put this tale in a drawer, and take it out when you are older—then you will observe errors that don't strike you now. You have evidently spent much time on it, but you have made a number of glaring spelling mistakes. **Inga S. Bell.**—Not quite up to the mark. Try again, my dear. **Gildart J. Walker.**—Subject not of sufficient interest. **Fred Thompson.**—Yes, your pen sketches are good. Don't get into the way of drawing vulgar comicalities; this is sadly overdone. **W. B. Huntley.**—Not so good this time—go more for outline. **W. Knowles.**—Crowded out this time. **W. B. Tapp.**—I regret the mistake. Your figure is tumbling over—for wash drawing use rougher card. **F. C. Owen.**—Do not attempt so much till you can draw better from life. "**Little Goose.**"—Yes, I am always glad to hear from you. **Basil Knowles.**—Not good enough. Your cousin is a good-looking fellow all the same. **C. F. Knowles.**—"Tommy's Christmas" is good, but I cannot find space. **A. E. Olley.**—Not so many fine lines; the idea is good enough—it wouldn't print. **E.B.D.**—A bad sketch from nature is much better than a slavishly-copied pen sketch. **D. McE.**—You are coming on space; the care you exercise shows you intend to succeed. Go ahead!

Contributions also received from: F. Baron, Joan Stirling, A. S. Atkinson, C. S. Baker, Geo. Monks, Archie Wallace, W. Matthews, H. Weeks, S. L. Harding, Norna Walford, A. C. Gwyer, M. S. Edwards, Alchemist, W. H. Thomson, John Cox, M. Duke (photograph too dim for reproduction), A. G. Eggleston, D. Kraemar, W. Linton Andrews, C. K. Langley, V. Clifford, and others.

(A number of accepted contributions held over.)

"CAPTAIN" COMPETITIONS FOR FEBRUARY.

NOTICE.—At the top of the first page the following particulars must be clearly written, thus:—

Competition No. ——, Class ——, Name ——,
Address ——, Age ——.

Letters to the Editor should not be sent with competitions.

We trust to your honour to send in unaided work.

GIRLS may compete.

You may enter for as many competitions as you like. Each "comp." must be sent in a separate envelope, or, when possible, on a post-card.

In every case the Editor's decision is final, and he cannot enter into correspondence with unsuccessful competitors.

Pages should be connected with paper-fasteners; not pins.

Address envelopes and post-cards as follows:—Competition No. ——, Class ——, "THE CAPTAIN," 12, Burleigh Street, Strand, London.

All competitions should reach us by February 12th.

SPECIAL NOTICE.—Only write on one side of each sheet of paper. Only one competition must be put into an envelope. Anybody disregarding these rules, or failing to address envelopes properly, *will be disqualified.*

No. 1.—"**Six Best Living Story-Writers for Boys.**"—Send a list of the six you most fancy—on a post-card. You can send as many post-cards as you like. Prizes: In each class Two BOOKS, selected from the works of the six authors on the winning list.

Class I. ... ... Age limit: Twenty-two.
Class II. ... ... Age limit: Eighteen.
Class III. ... ... Age limit: Fourteen.

No. 2.—"**Twelve Most Flourishing Towns in the United Kingdom,**" *excluding* London, Liverpool, Glasgow, Manchester, Birmingham, and Leeds. Well, barring these six, which do *you* consider the top twelve towns? Your votes will decide. Write your twelve on a post-card, in order of merit. Three prizes from our advertisements to the value of 7s. 6d. each, to be chosen by winners.

Class I. ... ... Age limit: Twenty-one.
Class II. ... ... Age limit: Sixteen.
Class III. ... ... Age limit: Twelve.

No. 3.—"**Animal Stories.**"—Not exceeding 400 words. Original anecdotes about animals. Prizes: THREE "PELICAN" PENS.

Class I. ... ... Age limit: Twenty-five.
Class II. ... ... Age limit: Twenty.
Class III. ... ... Age limit: Sixteen.

No. 4.—"**Best Sentence in Abbreviations.**"—Three prizes of 7s. each will be given for the three best sentences written in this way: "If the B. m. t., put:"—*i.e.*, "If the grate be empty, put coal on" (colon). Send post-cards only.

Class I. ... ... Age limit: Twenty-two.
Class II. ... ... Age limit: Eighteen.
Class III. ... ... Age limit: Fourteen.

No. 5.—"**How Boys can be Made Useful.**"—This competition is for *girls* only. Don't exceed 400 words. Prizes: A GUINEA among the three winners.

Class I. ... ... Age limit: Twenty.
Class II. ... ... Age limit: Sixteen.
Class III. ... ... Age limit: Twelve.

No. 6.—"**Map of Palestine**"—as it is at the present day. Marks given for *careful printing of names.* Prizes: THREE FULL SETS OF DRAWING MATERIALS.

Class I. ... . Age limit: Twenty.
Class II . ... . . Age limit: Sixteen.
Class III. . . . Age limit: Twelve.

NOTE.—As a number of Competitors seem hazy on this point, let them understand that a Competitor may enter for (say) an age limit 25 comp., so long as he has not actually turned 26. The same rule applies to all the other age limits

12, BURLEIGH STREET, STRAND, LONDON.

The Club. — Thousands of applications for membership of THE CAPTAIN Club have arrived at this office. Needless to say, sorting out the letters and booking the addresses is taking up a great deal of time, but all those who have written will kindly understand that, as yet, I can only acknowledge their applications in this general way. Later on I shall be issuing membership cards, and I shall then state in the magazine how these will have to be applied for. For the present this paragraph must serve as a "receipt" for applications to hand. THE CAPTAIN Club looks like developing into a very big concern.

Its Badge.—In the middle of this page you will find reproduced the long-talked-of CAPTAIN badge. Before you begin thinking to yourselves that this doesn't look much like a badge, kindly read on. The original of this illustration is in black, red, and blue; THE CAPTAIN, of course, being red, and the sea blue. We are negotiating with the biggest badge-making firm in this country for a very large supply. Until the negotiations are completed I cannot tell you how much the badge will cost, but you may depend upon it that we shall sell it to you absolutely at cost price—that is to say, we shall not make a penny profit on it ourselves. Of course, only members of THE CAPTAIN Club will be supplied with badges; so those regular readers who have not yet applied for membership had better hurry up and do so—a post-card will be sufficient. Kindly write your name and address very distinctly, with the declaration that you are a *bonâ-fide* purchaser of THE CAPTAIN. And be so good as to tell the truth, for, in this matter, as in all others connected with THE CAPTAIN, we put you on your honour to do and say the square thing.

"THE CAPTAIN" BADGE.

The Form it will Take.—You will be able to wear the badge on coat or cap, or on the ribbon of a straw hat. It will consist of an enamel button slightly smaller than the illustration here presented to you. As the badge will be provided with a pin you will be able to put it on whenever you like. It will be got up in a manner befitting the position of the magazine which issues it. By general consent, THE CAPTAIN has "gone up top" of all existing periodicals of a similar nature; and I say this not so much in a spirit of boastfulness as with a proud sense of the place THE CAPTAIN has taken amongst the world's periodicals — echoing, in point of fact, the sentiment which pervades my correspondence.

"The Captain" Brooch.—As, whenever a thing catches on largely amongst boys, the girls are pretty sure to follow suit and ask for it too, the ever polite O.F., having received a large number of requests from his young lady readers on the subject of a brooch, hereby begs to say that THE CAPTAIN badge for "girl-reader wear" will be produced in the shape of a brooch, but, of course, it will be very much smaller than the illustration. Girl-readers may, if they prefer, have the button described above instead of a brooch. In time I hope to use the badge for various purposes; for instance,

it will appear in future on the frontispiece to the volumes, and it will become, in fact, THE CAPTAIN trade mark. Further particulars next month

The Colonies and "The Captain" Badge.—One very gratifying proof of the tight grip THE CAPTAIN has taken, not only of the mother-country, but of her offspring, is the large number of communications we receive from the colonies, and, naturally, these colonial fellows all want the badge—and they shall have it. We hope that this badge will prove to be a further bond of union between the old home-land and the new home-lands—for, of course, the colonies are new lands as compared with the old-established firm called the United Kingdom. And so, what with our readers at home, in the colonies, and foreign lands generally (for a great many foreign boys who admire English sports and English ways and English papers are among our subscribers) there will be few places in the world to which THE CAPTAIN badge will not penetrate, there to be boldly worn on cap, and coat, and blouse, by faithful Members of the Crew.

Christmas Cards and Crackers.—I heartily thank my readers for the extremely pretty Christmas Cards which they were good enough to shower upon me at Christmas-time. We decorated the Editorial Desk and the Editorial Mantelpiece with these charming *souvenirs*, thus giving the office a very gay and seasonable appearance. As Messrs. Tom Smith & Co. were also good enough to send me a packing-case full of crackers, we were kept fearfully busy pulling them with anybody who happened to drop in, with the result that we soon found ourselves in possession of a large assortment of coloured paper caps, cracker jewellery, and sentimental mottoes. People who growl about Christmas, and say that it is a nuisance and not worth keeping, ought to be put in rainwater tubs head downwards—and left there.

"Plebeian" sends the following list, showing the numbers of Old Boys who represent our leading public schools in the new House of Commons :—

Eton ...	... 116	Charterhouse	... 5
Harrow	... 44	Marlborough	... 5
Rugby	... 24	Shrewsbury	.. 5
Cheltenham	... 12	Wellington	... 4
Winchester	... 11	Rossall ...	... 3
Clifton ...	... 7	Westminster	... 2

W. R. A. writes.—I noticed a paragraph in your September "Editorial Notes," stating that "Oswestry School was founded in 1407, and was thus the second oldest school in the kingdom"; and this set me wondering what the writer considered the oldest school in the kingdom. The date of the foundation of the Aberdeen Grammar School—of which I have the honour to be an old pupil—is, in reality, lost in the mists of antiquity. The earliest mention of it occurs in the year 1262, when a certain Thomas de Bennum is called "Rector Scholarum de Aberdeen." Stray mentions of the school occur during the next 200 years, and from 1479 onwards there exists a complete list of the rectors, or head-masters. I suggest that you publish a list of some of the oldest schools in the kingdom, with the dates when they were founded, including Scottish and Irish as well as English schools.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Edgar Manser.—(1) Certainly I will write my name in your autograph album. (2) I don't think I know of any cure for heavy sleeping. If it worries you why don't you consult your doctor? (3) To avoid corns wear very easy boots with good thick soles to them. (4) As to what I said about "growing until you are twenty-five," I didn't for a moment mean to infer that a fellow grows to any

"THE CAPTAIN" CLUB.

The Editor will be glad to receive names and addresses of those readers who wish to join THE CAPTAIN Club. Only *bonâ fide* purchasers of THE CAPTAIN are eligible for election. There is no entrance fee and no subscription. Simply declare that you are a regular purchaser of the Magazine, or that it is purchased for you. Various particulars relating to the CLUB will be found in THE CAPTAIN for January, 1901.

extent after eighteen or nineteen—sometimes people stop at sixteen. Growth after eighteen is, of course, very slight. However, Dame Nature is the lady who rules what the number of a man's inches shall be, and so you must leave the matter to her, and don't bother.

Nemo.—I don't advise you to pay a premium to an American farmer. If you go as a farm labourer you get a labourer's wages, a healthy life, and lots to eat. If a fellow is smart he can get on, but he ought not to go out unless he has a friend there who will see him through. Try and find somebody who has done some farming in America—somebody who "knows the ropes," in fact—and have a chat with him. Write to me again if you want any further information.

E. C. S. A.—I quite understand the difficulties you mention, but I have made it a definite rule not to discuss such matters in the columns of this magazine. It is in the power of men like you, with influence and a knowledge of what is right, to do an immense amount of good in their own particular circles. If every other young fellow of twenty-one had your healthy earnestness and desire to help weak-minded chums, the world would be a very much better place. Do all you can, and I shall be glad to hear of the success which I am sure will attend your efforts.

One of the Club had a curious experience owing to a slip of our binder's. His September, 1900, copy of THE CAPTAIN contained two instalments of "The Three Scouts." I need hardly say that we are not usually so generous as this. Curiously enough, only to-day a gentleman came up to the office with a Christmas number in which "An Unexpected Wolf Hunt" was bound upside down; of course we gave him another copy with the tale right way up.

Samson is angry with me for not answering his letter. My dear "Samson," if you could only see the tremendous pile of communications which lies in front of me as I write these lines you would send me a humble apology for being angry. Letters I cannot give an answer to I always do my best at least to acknowledge. But, my dear "Samson," if you want any information direct, enclose a stamped envelope or an addressed post-card.

Walter B. Wood is a very sensible fellow, for when he feels inclined to write and ask me a question he looks through the many answers which have already appeared in THE CAPTAIN, and generally finds that the information he wants has already been given. I wish other readers would do this as well. Certainly "W. B. W." may consider himself an official representative of THE CAPTAIN at St. Paul's School.

J. E. Matthews and **Roanite.**—Yes, rather vexing to be "honourably mentioned" seven times and not get a prize. I cannot help it though. Perhaps some day we will have a scheme for awarding prizes to those who get a certain number of "honmens." As soon as I have got the Club into working order I will turn my attention to this matter.

"Eyed Awry" sends me epistles which are absolutely weird, for she decorates her remarks with extraordinary sketches. She seems to be a young lady blessed with a lively wit and a subtle fancy. I should advise her to find out what particular line she is strongest at, and work her hardest at that. Nothing like being a specialist nowadays.

Alfred Jay.—Yes; dumb-bells. Sandow's Developer, and Ryan Exercisers are good for bed-room use. Put in ten minutes' hard work at them when you get up, but don't fatigue yourself. You will find plenty about this in Mr. Fry's "Answers to Correspondents.

Rosemary Bunbury.—(1) No, I don't think it is cruel to keep a linnet—not more cruel than keeping a canary, anyhow. (2) Yes; an ordinary canary's cage would do. (3) Rape and canary seed, with a little flax seed for a treat, is the best food for it.

C. G. T. (SWANSEA).—Write to Messrs. Stanley Gibbons, Ltd., 391, Strand, London, W.C., for one of their plain albums, price 5s. They are the best things in which to keep pictorial post-cards.

A. R. Cousins.—(1) Write to Messrs. C. Farlows & Co., Ltd., 191, Strand, W.C., for your fishing rod. (2) "The Modern Angler," price 2s. 9d., post free, from L. Upcott Gill, 170, Strand, W.C.

Frank Clayton.—Use any make of "Special Rapid" plates for portraiture during the winter. **The King's Hospital,** Dublin, of which we published a photograph last December, is the Blue Coat School of Ireland. **B. P. Wye.**—Yours is a nice little story, showing promise, but not quite strong enough for publication. **Urgent.**—You must consult a doctor or bone specialist. **Jumbo.**—No, I am not Mr. Harry How. **Eric Rothwell.**—Yes, pray consider yourself an official representative of this magazine in the Isle of Man. **J. L. T.**—Thanks for competition suggestions. Hope to make use of them. **Toodleoo.**—Send a stamped envelope and I will give you a list of books—no room here. **One of your Chefoo Crew.**—Very funny. Have sent it on to Mr. Swift. **E. Read.**—I sent your letter on to the Doctor. **Sydney L. Langlois** is thanked for Chili "new issues." **G. Moore** writes to say that the King's School, Canterbury, is the oldest school in England. We shall find out about this soon. **T. S. R.**—Kindly send a stamped envelope if you wish for a reply to your letter. **Four Bells.**—Neither of the stories you mention has appeared in book form. **"F."** sends an account of Edinburgh Academy football. Sorry no room to print it. **Camera.**—Hope to use those excellent photographs of Marlborough in due course. **A Lover of the "Old Fag."**—Special corner by itself in top drawer, Blushes Locker. **"Waiting Still."**—Pitman's. **T. W. G.**—That's a stumper. Ask the editor of the *Navy and Army* to recommend you a book. Don't forget the stamped envelope. **R. C. Howlden.**—I have decided not to revive the controversy *re* "Cheap Photography." You did your best, and your facts were right in the main. **C. J. S. Williamson.**—An amusing letter! Yes, of course, I had "The Cruise of the *Vengeful*" written specially for you. **G. F. B.**—My dear boy, I don't want *any more* letters about that "Cheap Photography" article. **Myrtle Green.**—I am very glad to read your appreciation of Mr. Fry. **L. G.** (WINCHESTER).—No; don't "peach" to the Head. Just leave him alone, and have nothing to do with him. **G. Jennings.**—The small worms common to the water suffice for the fishes' food generally, but you might drop in a few ants' eggs occasionally.

Letters, Photographs, etc., also received from:—R. C. Carrick, M. Brown, Alfred W. James, K. H. Smith, "Ajax," John L. Turner, J. R. Burnham, Arden Vye, G. T. Lucas, "Max Olblebaf," "Mars," Cyanide Whiffles, M. E. Bennett (*nom de plume* indecipherable), and many others; "Calendar Events" from Harold W. Smith.

THE OLD FAG.

A number of answers held over.

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Results of December Competitions.

No. I.—"Omitted Words."

CLASS I. (Age limit: Twenty-two.)

WINNER OF 10s.: JULIAN SIDNEY PRICE, Upnor, Rochester.

A CONSOLATION PRIZE has been awarded to: DONALD M. MUNRO, 8, Lawton Street, Newcastle-on-Tyne.

HONOURABLE MENTION: Reuben Cohen, Frances Pratt, L. D. Nicol, H. Hooper.

CLASS II. (Age limit: Eighteen.)

WINNER OF 10s.: MARJORIE BIMNEY, 18, Broomgrove Road, Sheffield.

A CONSOLATION PRIZE has been awarded to: CHARLES S.-J. C. ROBERTS, The Grammar School, Bishop's Stortford, Herts.

HONOURABLE MENTION: Harold C. Smye, Hilda S. Petter, Ethel Thompson, S. H. Ackland, Charles Gutch, Alex. H. Clapperton, G. H. Varley, Edgar F. Philpot.

CLASS III. (Age limit: Fourteen.)

WINNER OF 10s.: JOHN RAE, 9, Queen's Terrace, Aberdeen.

CONSOLATION PRIZES have been awarded to: MARION HOUSE, 79, Broomwood Road, Wandsworth Common, S.W.; and E. C. MARSHALL, 31, Rose Terrace, Spilsby Road, Boston, Linc.

HONOURABLE MENTION: E. T. Fairlie, H. Kitchingman, Eldrid Reynolds, Dorothy Wheatley, Henry W. Hill, Gladys Scantlebury, Arnold Linsley, James Wilson, H. Stuart Blackmore, Fred. Hancock.

No. II.—"A Picture of Books."

CLASS I. (Age limit: Twenty-one.)

WINNER OF SET OF DRAWING MATERIALS: GWYNEDD M. HUDSON, 57, Tisbury Road, Hove, Sussex.

HONOURABLE MENTION: C. Crossley, A. S. Atkinson, T. Alwark Chaplin, G. Mitchell, F. E. F. Crisp, Dorothy Bimney, A. J. Brady, R. N. Woodall, G. A. Callister, W. Logan, D. C. Hudson, Tillie Shephard, F. Carter, W. B. Tapp, F. Livingstone, Bertha Boxall, J. H. Parsonage.

CLASS II. (Age limit: Sixteen.)

WINNER OF SET OF DRAWING MATERIALS: NOREEN BUNBURY, Hildon Manor, Tonbridge.

HONOURABLE MENTION: W. Vaughan, A. H. Gander, D. Pryde, T. Lees, G. A. Bell, H. A. Calnan, C. H. Gregory, J. P. Salway, G. H. Mair, C. B. Reid, O. Fleming, W. B. Huntly, R. Middleton, C. Dare, G. Summers, J. H. Waterston, N. P. Goodacre, F. Leicester.

CLASS III. (Age limit: Twelve.)

WINNER OF SET OF DRAWING MATERIALS: G. HOLLINS, 4, Market Place, Newcastle, Staffs.

HONOURABLE MENTION: Leonard Baseden, H. Lovelock, D. H. Wilkinson, R. C. Lewis, Gladys Mayer.

No. III.—"Villain in Fiction."

CLASS I. (Age limit: Twenty-five.)

WINNER OF PRIZE: JOHN PETSIE, 31, Northcote Street, Newcastle-on-Tyne.

A CONSOLATION PRIZE has been awarded to: ELSIE SIMMONS, "Brenzett," Banisters Road, Southampton.

HONOURABLE MENTION: Owen Chitty, William Mellor, Ernest A. Taylor.

CLASS II. (Age limit: Twenty.

WINNER OF PRIZE: W. GRIFFITHS, 17, St. Andrew's Place, Bradford.

A CONSOLATION PRIZE has been awarded to: HELEN K. WATTS, Lenton Vicarage, Nottingham.

HONOURABLE MENTION: Gwendolen Holliday, W. W. Humphreys, R. B. Ewbank, Bertha C. Wilson.

CLASS III. (Age limit: Sixteen.)

WINNER OF PRIZE: CHARLES MURRAY, c/o Mr. Elder, 18, Downfield Place, Edinburgh.

A CONSOLATION PRIZE has been awarded to: WILLIAM VAUGHAN, "Durban," 137, Old Road West, Gravesend.

HONOURABLE MENTION: Ira Turkington, T. Gibbings, Alex. B. Templeton, A. D. H. Allan, James Weir, M. Welby.

No. IV.—"Map of Spain and Portugal."

CLASS I. (Age limit: Twenty-two.)

WINNER OF PRIZE: ROBERT YORSTON, 64, Ashley Terrace, Edinburgh.

HONOURABLE MENTION: E. Thompson, J. Wood, D. Y. de Ybarrondo, W. D. Kerr, Nancie Hummerston, W. Borthwick.

CLASS II. (Age limit: Eighteen.)

WINNER OF PRIZE: TOM STREET, 23, Lauriston Gardens, Edinburgh.

HONOURABLE MENTION: Sybil Haines, W. A. Frame, Dorothy Watkins, Adam McGregor, W. Vaughan, A. H. Gander, W. Matthews, W. Cruickshank, H. G. Lee, Gwendoline Smith, Gertrude M. Hawkins, Edith M. Burrow, R. S. Frame.

CLASS III. (Age limit: Fourteen.)

WINNER OF PRIZE: F. C. PORTER, 40, College Street, Southampton.

HONOURABLE MENTION: J. Pryde, J. A. Forder, W. A. Storey, H. Gayton, C. G. P. Laidlow, E. T. Fairlee, G. Dickson, E. Spencer, C. Stokes, H. H. Peters, C. H. Ilsley, C. Hayter, C. Hargreaves, Gladys Salmon, J. Fairweather, C. S. Ward, F. L. Liddell.

No. V.—"Spelling Mistakes." (One age limit: Eighteen.)

WINNER OF £1 1s.: JOHN B. EDGAR, Ashton, Lockerbie, N.B.

CONSOLATION PRIZES have been awarded to: LIONEL D. SAUNDERS, 42, Bath Road, Exeter; and K. RAYNOR, School House, Ipswich.

HONOURABLE MENTION: Horace E. Palmer, A. D. Hardie, M. E. Cock.

No. VI.—"For Athletes."

WINNER OF 10s. 6d.: P. R. PARKINSON, 75, Ormerod Road, Burnley.

A CONSOLATION PRIZE has been awarded to: T. M. O'CALLAGHAN, 35, Morval Road, Brixton, S.W.

HONOURABLE MENTION: M. C. Rhodes, Frank Harper, Miss Browne, Robert C. Warrier.

Winners of Consolation Prizes are requested to inform the Editor which they would prefer—a volume of the "Captain," "Strand," or "Wide World."

COMMENTS ON THE DECEMBER COMPETITIONS.

No. I.—Our "Omitted Words" Competitions are becoming exceedingly popular. This month there were nearly 800 entries for "Comp. I."

No. II.—Although somewhat below the usual standard of excellence, some very good drawings were submitted for the "Picture of Books" Competition, the prize in Class I. being awarded to the sender of an excellent study in light and shade; that in Class II. was won by a pencil sketch in which the books were very artistically grouped; while in Class III. the prize was carried off by a delicate pencil sketch in which the perspective was most accurate. The piles of books also served as excellent guides to the popularity of certain boys' authors. Needless to say, the works of T. B. Reed, G. A. Henty, Jules Verne, and Gordon Stables found prominent places in every "picture." The "O. F." was represented by numerous volumes of THE CAPTAIN.

No. III.—The creations of the minds of Shakespeare, Dickens, Conan Doyle, du Maurier, Stevenson, Hall Caine, and Guy Boothby, came in for the greatest share of attention in this competition, with essays on such "villains" as Shylock, Squeers, Ralph Nickleby, Prof. Moriarty, Svengali, Stephen Orry, and Dr. Nikola. In each class the villain chosen by the author of the prize essay was one of Dickens' characters.

No. IV.—The Map Competition this month was as popular as ever. The best maps were in Class II., the winning one in this class hailing from Scotland, as did that in Class I. We should like to see the competitors in Class III. pay more attention to the printing of names and the shading of mountains.

No. V.—The winner of this competition is to be congratulated on his vigilance. We had no idea so many "Spelling Mistakes" had escaped the generally very wide-open editorial eye.

No. VI.—Essays "cracking up" the especial advantages of every conceivable pastime were submitted for this competition, the prize being won by the author of a well-written paper on "Mountaineering." Amongst other "favourite pastimes" told of were Cycling, Football, Cricket, Photography, Lawn Tennis, Egg and Butter-fly collecting. Specially good excerpts from some of these competitions will be published in THE CAPTAIN when space permits.

THE COMPETITION EDITOR.

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